



**Erasmus+**



**UNIVERSITÄT  
LEIPZIG**

## **New Age of Sport Management Education in Europe (NASME)**

Research Project under the Erasmus + Programme

NASME Report Germany

Compiled by

Olivia Wohlfart  
Sandy Adam  
Gregor Hovemann  
Martin Kaden

Leipzig University  
Faculty of Sport Science  
Department of Sport Economics and Sport Management



## *Table of contents*

List of figures .....	I
List of tables .....	I
1 Introduction.....	1
2 Sport (management) in Germany .....	2
2.1 Sport structure and culture .....	2
2.1.1 Legal framework of sport.....	2
2.1.2 Main sources of funding for sport .....	4
2.1.3 Sport culture .....	5
2.2 Sport management education.....	6
2.3 Labour market in the area of sport management.....	7
3 Method and data collection .....	8
3.1 Quantitative data collection and analysis .....	9
3.2 Qualitative data collection and analysis.....	12
4 General findings and results.....	16
4.1 Results from quantitative data analysis .....	16
4.1.1 Changes in working life .....	16
4.1.2 Cooperation .....	17
4.1.3 Recruitment .....	18
4.1.4 Competencies .....	18
4.1.5 Sector analysis.....	23
4.2 Results from qualitative data analysis.....	55
4.2.1 Trends in sport management in Germany.....	55
4.2.2 Competencies .....	63
4.2.3 Job development, qualifications and recruitment.....	77
5 Conclusion, implications and outlook .....	84
5.1 Conclusion.....	85
5.2 Recommendation for the future sport management curriculum .....	89
5.3 Implementation of findings in sport management curriculum at Leipzig University ....	93
5.4 Requests to sport labour market.....	97
5.5 Limitations .....	99



Erasmus+

5.6 Outlook .....	101
6 References .....	102
Annex.....	A

### List of figures

Figure 1: The structure of organised sport in Germany (own illustration, adapted from Freyer, 2003, p. 243).....	3
Figure 2: Revenues and expenses of German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) 2009-2012 .....	5
Figure 3: Visual model of mixed-methods sequential explanatory design procedure applied in the NASME project .....	9
Figure 4: Recruitment instruments of German respondents (n=53) .....	18
Figure 5: Importance-Performance-Analysis (IPA) of special competencies in sport management (German results; n = 49) .....	23
Figure 6: Classification of respondents in hierarchical levels across four sectors (n=54), according to Kent & Chelladurai (2001); Oja, Bass & Gordon (2015) .....	25
Figure 7: Recruitment in non-profit sport organisations (n=26).....	27
Figure 8: Recruitment in professional sports clubs (n=12) .....	33
Figure 9: Recruitment in public sector sport organisations (n=6) .....	38
Figure 10: Recruitment in private sports businesses (n=9).....	44
Figure 11: Fastest growing functional areas in Germany (n=52) .....	49
Figure 12: Recruitment of future employees on sport labour market (n=54).....	50
Figure 13: Code cloud showing the competence characteristics mentioned most often in the interviews (own illustration) .....	66
Figure 14: Coded segments classified according to the competence explorer (own illustration, according to Heyse & Erpenbeck, 2004, p. XXII) .....	67
Figure 15: Subject-specific competence areas of sport management courses in Germany (Dunkel et al., 2018, 55) .....	90
Figure 16: Assessment criteria .....	96

### List of tables

Table 1: Subject-specific competence areas of sport management programmes in Germany (Dunkel et al., 2018). .....	6
Table 2: Unemployment rates specific to the labour market in the area of sport management in Germany .....	7
Table 3: Sectors of contacted individuals in Germany (n=103) .....	10
Table 4: Classification of respondents in hierarchical levels (n=54), according to Kent & Chelladurai (2001); Oja, Bass & Gordon (2015) .....	11
Table 5: Sample description (own illustration) .....	15
Table 6: Expected future effects on subjective working area (n=54) .....	16
Table 7: Fastest growing functional areas (n=52) .....	16
Table 8: Distribution of female and male employees in managerial positions in the area of sport management in Germany (n=54).....	17

Table 9: Top current competencies of professionals in the area of sport management in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.0 and above; n=53).....	19
Table 10: Top future competencies in the area of sport management in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.40 and above; n=51).....	20
Table 11: Core competencies, n=49.....	20
Table 12: Special competencies, n=49.....	21
Table 13: Fastest growing functional areas in non-profit sport organisations in Germany (n=26).....	26
Table 14: Strongest current competencies of non-profit sport organisation professionals in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.0 and above; n=26).....	27
Table 15: Weakest current competencies of non-profit sports organisation professionals in Germany (with an average mean value of 3.0 and below; n=26).....	28
Table 16: Top future competencies of non-profit sport organisation professionals in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.4 and above; n=25).....	28
Table 17: Core competencies of non-profit sport organisations.....	29
Table 18: Special competencies of non-profit sport organisations.....	30
Table 19: Fastest growing functional areas in professional sports clubs in Germany (n=11) .	32
Table 20: Strongest current competencies according to professionals working in professional sports clubs in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.0 and above; n=11).....	33
Table 21: Weakest current competencies according to professionals working in professional sports clubs in Germany (with an average mean value of 3.0 and below; n=11).....	34
Table 22: Top future competencies according to professionals working in professional sports clubs in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.4 and above; n=11).....	35
Table 23: Core competencies in professional sports clubs.....	35
Table 24: Special competencies in professional sports clubs.....	36
Table 25: Fastest growing functional areas in public sector sport organisations in Germany (n=7).....	37
Table 26: Strongest current competencies according to professionals working in public sector sport organisations in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.0 and above; n=7).....	39
Table 27: Weakest current competencies according to professionals working in public sector sport organisations in Germany (with an average mean value of 3.0 and below; n=7).....	39
Table 28: Top future competencies according to professionals working in public sector sport organisations in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.4 and above; n=7).....	40
Table 29: Low future competencies according to professionals working in public sector sport organisations in Germany (with an average mean value of 3.0 and below; n=7).....	40
Table 30: Core competencies in public sector sport organisations.....	41
Table 31: Special competencies in public sector sport organisations.....	41
Table 32: Fastest growing functional areas in private sports businesses in Germany (n=9)...	43
Table 33: Strongest current competencies according to professionals working in private sports businesses in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.0 and above; n=9).....	44

Table 34: Weakest current competencies according to professionals working in private sports businesses in Germany (with an average mean value of 3.0 and below; n=9) .....	45
Table 35: Top future competencies according to professionals working in private sports businesses in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.4 and above; n=9).....	46
Table 36: Core competencies in private sports businesses .....	46
Table 37: Special competencies in private sports businesses.....	47
Table 38: Strongest current competencies according to sectors .....	51
Table 39: Most important future competencies according to sectors .....	51
Table 40: Most important core competencies according to sectors .....	52
Table 41: Most important special competencies according to sectors .....	53
Table 42: Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning aspects of digitalisation (own illustration) .....	56
Table 43: Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning aspects of commercialisation (own illustration) .....	58
Table 44: Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning aspects of internationalisation (own illustration) .....	60
Table 45: Most important future competencies in general (own illustration) .....	64
Table 46: Most important future competencies according to sectors (own illustration) .....	65
Table 47: Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning personal competencies (own illustration) .....	68
Table 48: Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning socio-communicative competencies (own illustration) .....	70
Table 49: Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning growing job opportunities in the functional area of PR & (Social Media-) Marketing (own illustration) .....	78
Table 50: Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning required qualifications in the sport labour market (own illustration) .....	80
Table 51: Recruitment of future employees in different types of sport organisations (own illustration) .....	81
Table 52: Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning recruitment processes in the sport labour market (own illustration) .....	82
Table 53: Recommendations for the future sport management curriculum in Germany .....	91
Table 54: Requests to sport labour market in order to support the future sport management curriculum in Germany.....	97



## 1 Introduction

The heterogeneous sport market is characterised by a strong growth and has specialised in the course of societal change processes, first through commercialisation and professionalisation and successively Europeanisation (Radaelli, 2003), globalisation and digitalisation (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2007). The connection between the labour market and higher education institutions in the field of sport management is of particular relevance in this aspect and can be described by the institution of a “metaphorical contract” (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). In the course of this contractual relationship, it is assumed that the sport labour market assigns higher education institutions with the duty to adequately educate and qualify graduates of sport management study programmes according to the current and future requirements of the sport labour market. A holistic conception of an academic vocational preparation, as postulated by Arnold (2015), necessitates an intensive debate about the requirements and expectations of the sport labour market.

The ERASMUS+ project *New Age of Sport Management Education in Europe* in nine different countries has the objective to identify competencies of sport managers that are relevant currently and in the future and to compare them in the context of Europeanisation in the labour market and in higher education institutions. From the national perspective of Germany, the following research questions are relevant:

- Which positions including their tasks, roles and activities exist currently and in the future in the sport labour market?
- Which competency requirements do the employers address currently and in the future to (prospective) jobholders?
- How do these aspects affect recruitment processes currently and in the future?

The research team includes Professor Dr Gregor Hovemann, Olivia Wohlfart (M. Sc.) and Sandy Adam (M. Sc.) of the Department of Sport Economics and Sport Management at Leipzig University. Professor Dr Gregor Hovemann has the overall project responsibility and Olivia Wohlfart and Sandy Adam are both responsible for conducting the research and the administration of the project. Martin Kaden (M. Sc.) assists the research team with formatting and technical support.

What follows is a concluding report on the core findings of the NASME project for Germany, which is structured as follows: Chapter 2 presents an introduction to the sport structure and culture, sport management education, as well as the labour market in the field of sport management in Germany. Chapter 3 introduces the general methodology used in the project and more specifically informs about methods of data collection and data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the main findings from two periods of data collection concerning current competencies, future competencies, core competencies and special competencies in the sport labour market. It further informs about sectorial differences concerning the core competencies and discusses three global trends, which the results found to influence the

working environment of sport managers greatly: digitalisation, commercialisation and internationalisation (Petry, Froberg, & Madella, 2006). Chapter 5 then discusses the main findings and highlights implications both for education and for practice in Germany. It further outlines the limitations of the project and gives an outlook on more research to be conducted in the future.

## **2 Sport (management) in Germany**

### **2.1 Sport structure and culture**

#### **2.1.1 Legal framework of sport**

The contemporary German sport system can be regarded as a manifest reflection of sporting traditions – in particular the gymnastics movement (*Turnbewegung*) initiated by F. L. Jahn (1778-1852) – but also with considerable breaks and reconstructive periods. The main results of this historical development are the dual structure (horizontally in the form of associations of all sports clubs of a jurisdiction and vertically sport associations uniting member clubs in a particular sport at the local, regional and national levels (Kurscheidt & Deitersen-Wieber, 2011, p. 264 f.).

At the top of the organised sport movement in Germany stands the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) – a non-governmental umbrella organisation. The DOSB was founded on 20 May 2006 as the result of a merger between the German Sports Confederation (DSB) and the National Olympic Committee (NOC) for Germany. Financial issues and organisational efficiency were the driving forces behind this pooling of general and Olympic sport interests (DOSB, n.d.).

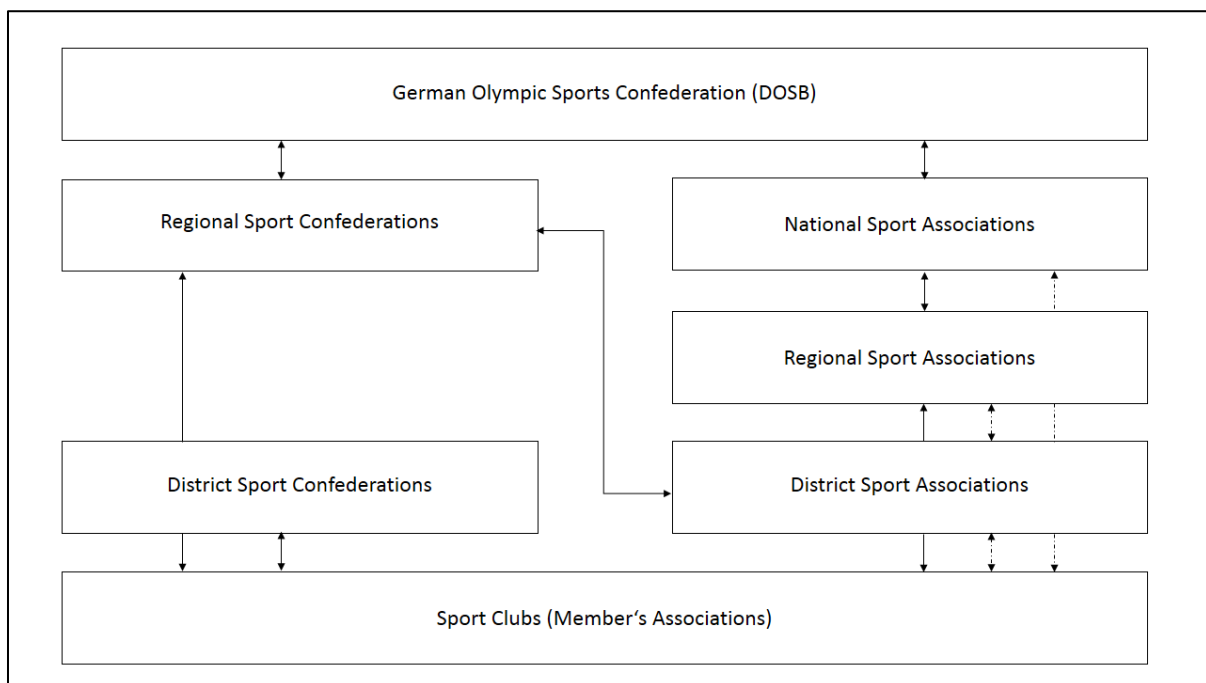
The DOSB is the largest citizens' movement in Germany.<sup>1</sup> In 2008, some 90,775 mostly grassroots member's association sport clubs with a membership of 23.7 million people were indirectly associated with the umbrella organisation. In comparison, in 2008 existed some 5,800 private gyms with a membership of some 6 million individuals, meaning that membership in the grassroots sport clubs was four times higher. The development of the private gyms shows a volatile picture, as they are more vulnerable to business cycles and the disposable income of households. Increasingly, franchise chains of gyms gain market share, as they benefit from economies of scale and scope and attract customers by innovative bundling of high quality services and aggressive price policies. In 2011, the private gyms accounted for some 12 % of all health clubs in Germany. Compared to the gyms, the member's association sport clubs show a relative stability, which can be attributed to the loyalty of the members as well as a market monopoly in competitive sports, especially team sports (Kurscheidt & Deitersen-Wieber, 2011, p. 267). Currently, the DOSB has 101 member associations, including

---

<sup>1</sup> Currently, about 91,000 mostly community grassroots sports clubs count some 27 million memberships (DOSB, n.d.)



16 regional sport confederations, 66 national sport associations and 19 sport associations with special tasks (DOSB, n.d.). Figure 1 provides a general overview of the structure of organised sport in Germany. The organised sport system in Germany can be regarded as extraordinarily diverse and vivid. The German Football Association (DFB) is the largest national sport association with a membership of some 7 million individuals (DFB, 2017) followed by the German Gymnastics Association, German Tennis Association, German Shooting Sport and Archery Federation and German Athletics Association. Arguably, the German Football Association is the world's biggest national sport association (Kurscheidt & Deitersen-Wieber, 2011, p. 269).



*Figure 1: The structure of organised sport in Germany (own illustration, adapted from Freyer, 2003, p. 243)*

As in other European countries, the sport business in general and the corporations that run the economic operations of professional (team) sport have become quite powerful. Under the governance of sport and league associations (the latter composed of teams competing in a certain league and constituted on democratic principles), the league companies generate and control significant funds. The industry leader is the German Football League (DFL) that markets Bundesliga and Bundesliga 2. In comparison to the other so-called "Top 5 Leagues" (England, Spain, Germany, Italy and France), the German Bundesliga has a rather balanced mix of revenue items. The reason is that football broadcasts are to a lesser extent covered by pay TV stations and that stadium attendance ranges amongst the highest in the world, because of reasonable ticket prices. In governance terms the currently strongly debated 50+1-Rule, which rules out private investors from taking over a whole football club, considerably contributes to



financial solidity of the clubs and the sustainability of the sport. However, it must be stressed that the dominant economic role of football may risk the sport diversity and fan culture. Other professional sports leagues like in handball, ice hockey and basketball generate by far less market share, depend on local markets and are more vulnerable in economic terms (Kurscheidt & Deitersen-Wieber, 2011, p. 278 ff.).

## 2.1.2 Main sources of funding for sport

The organised sport system in Germany (DOSB, national associations, clubs) is funded through membership fees, lottery contributions and to some extent licencing. In addition, the sport-governing bodies receive funds from the federal budget for top-level sports (see Figure 2 for an overview). The federal states as well as municipalities and communities substantially support sport at their respective hierarchical level, for example by means of constructing and maintaining sport facilities. Therefore, it can be highlighted that it is the joint services production of sport associations and the clubs together with public institutions and their financing of, particularly, sport facilities that dominate the German sport economy.

The member's association sport clubs seem to perform financially well, although membership fees are reasonably moderate (Breuer, 2009). The clubs benefit from a relatively flat cost structure, because of a nearly free provision of sport facilities by public institutions and the generally applicable tax exemptions for non-profit organisations. The clubs furthermore benefit, on the cost side, from the volunteering work of their members (Kurscheidt & Deitersen-Wieber, 2011, p. 273). More than 8.6 million volunteers and honorary workers are active in these sport clubs, committing some 450 million hours of work (DOSB, n.d.). In economic terms, the public and non-profit sport sector account for 65 % of sport specific production, as well as the highest employment in sport in Germany, despite the increasing professionalisation and commercialisation of sport (Kurscheidt & Deitersen-Wieber, 2011, p. 277).

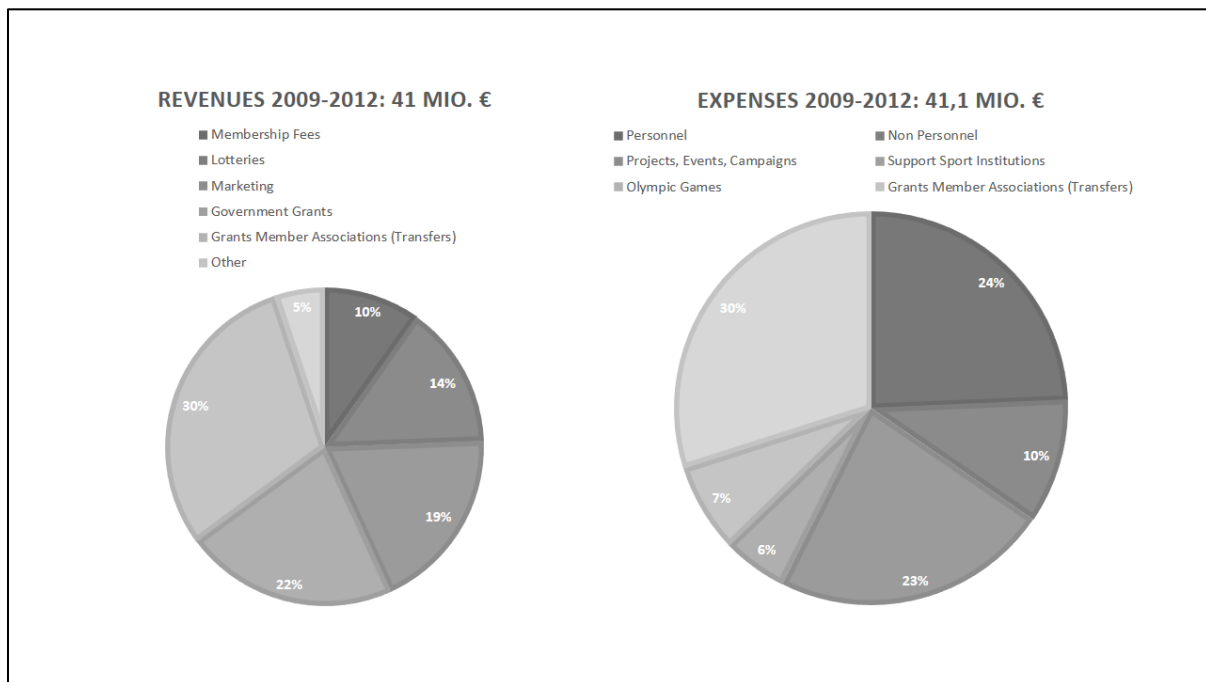


Figure 2: Revenues and expenses of German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) 2009-2012

The DOSB sends national teams to the Olympic Games, and the national sport associations send athletes to World and European Championships. The sport clubs, national sport associations, high performance centres and Olympic training centres play a crucial role in preparing them in the best possible way for these events. German high performance sport is financed by the sport budget of the German Federal Ministry of the Interior with a funding amount of some €130 million. In addition, the German Armed Forces, the German Federal Border Police and the German Customs Authority play an extraordinary role in supporting high performance sport by providing places in their sport promotion groups for top-level athletes (DOSB, n.d.).

### 2.1.3 Sport culture

The variety of sport is also reflected in education programmes of organised sport. There are more than 600 different educational curricula, which committed persons can take advantage of in order to gain a DOSB licence as coaches, club managers or youth managers. Currently, almost 500,000 persons hold a valid DOSB licence of some kind. Considered as being the core of physical education, gymnastics, swimming and track and field are key sports in German school sports curricula. All boys and girls therefore learn, more or less, the practice of those sports in early age (Kurscheidt & Deitersen-Wieber, 2011, p. 271).

## 2.2 Sport management education

Germany has a total of 51 sport management programmes (Wallrodt & Thieme, 2016)<sup>2</sup> with various denominations. Sport management specific programmes are sometimes organised at sport science faculties or institutes and sometimes at faculties of economics or business administration. In certain cases (universities of applied sciences), sport management is organised in sport management departments.

Some 27 higher education institutions offer a bachelor's degree in sport management. Some 17 of these institutions also offer a master's degree in sport management. There are seven programmes devoted to a MBA in sport management. So far, no specific PhD programme (graduate school or similar) exists. All eleven universities offer the possibility to attain a sport management related PhD degree.

A bachelor's degree programme usually consists of 180 ECTS while the master's degree and MBA programmes are comprised of 90-120 ECTS. Dunkel, Wohlfart and Wendeborn (2018) examined the distribution of different topics within sport management study programmes in Germany. Table 1 shows an overview of the subject-specific competence areas in these study programmes.

Table 1: *Subject-specific competence areas of sport management programmes in Germany (Dunkel et al., 2018).*

	Economics	Sport Management	Thesis	Sport Sciences	Practical Work	Other
Total (n=51)	28.86 %	27.76 %	15.94 %	5.98%	4.71%	16.74%
MBA (n=7)	35.63 %	33.10 %	19.44 %	0%	0%	11.83%
Master (n=17)	18.22 %	31.11 %	21.72 %	5.69%	6.57%	16.70%
Bachelor (n=27)	32.74 %	19.09 %	6.66 %	12.25 %	7.56%	21.71%

It is difficult to make assumptions about sport management topics being included in general sport studies. Whether or not these topics are included might, for example, be dependent on the availability of a sport management department at the faculty or institution. Meaning that if a university has no sport management department, then the sport science programmes offered at this university will probably not have sport management topics included.

---

<sup>2</sup> Please find an excel sheet with all 51 sport management study programmes as a download (courtesy of Wallrodt & Thieme, 2016): <https://www.hs-koblenz.de/profilepages/wallrodt/downloads/>

To date, there are no figures available on the number of staff (teachers/professors) working in the field of sport management in higher education institutions<sup>3</sup>. At least one professor would be responsible for each of the 27 bachelor's degree programmes and this study assumes that another ten professors are responsible for master's degree and MBA programmes.

The scientific community in the area of sport management is constantly evolving and growing. Next to an annual national sport economics and sport management congress and working group (Arbeitskreis Sportökonomie e.V.<sup>4</sup>), there are several peer-reviewed journals in the area of sport management in Germany.

### **2.3 Labour market in the area of sport management**

Table 2 gives an overview of the unemployment rates specific to the labour market in the area of sport management in Germany.

*Table 2: Unemployment rates specific to the labour market in the area of sport management in Germany*

Item	Date	Unemployment Rates	Source
Unemployment rate in Germany	12/ 2017	5.3 %	Bundesagentur für Arbeit. (n.d.).
Unemployment rate of youths in Germany (15-under 25 years old)	2017 2010	5.2 % 6.9 %	Bundesagentur für Arbeit. (n.d.b).
Unemployment rate of academics in Germany (people with a university degree)	2016	2.3 %	Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung, 2017.
Unemployment rate of sport science graduates in Leipzig	2015	6.16 % (Graduates search an average of 4.07 months to find their first employment after graduation)	Wohlfart, Hodeck & Hovemann, 2017.
Unemployment rate of sport management graduates in Leipzig	2015	10 % (8.3 % Master graduates. 13.3 % Bachelor graduates)	Uebersezig, 2016.
Unemployment rate of sport management graduates in Cologne	2010	3.8 %	Mrazek & Hartmann-Tews, 2010.

This chapter presented a general overview on sport (management) in Germany, including structural and cultural aspects of sport, as well as the education system and the labour market

<sup>3</sup> For example, the Department of Sport Economics and Sport Management at Leipzig University currently includes one professor, one post-doc position and two research assistant positions (PhD candidates).

<sup>4</sup> For more information, please visit <http://www.arbeitskreis-sportoeconomie.de/>

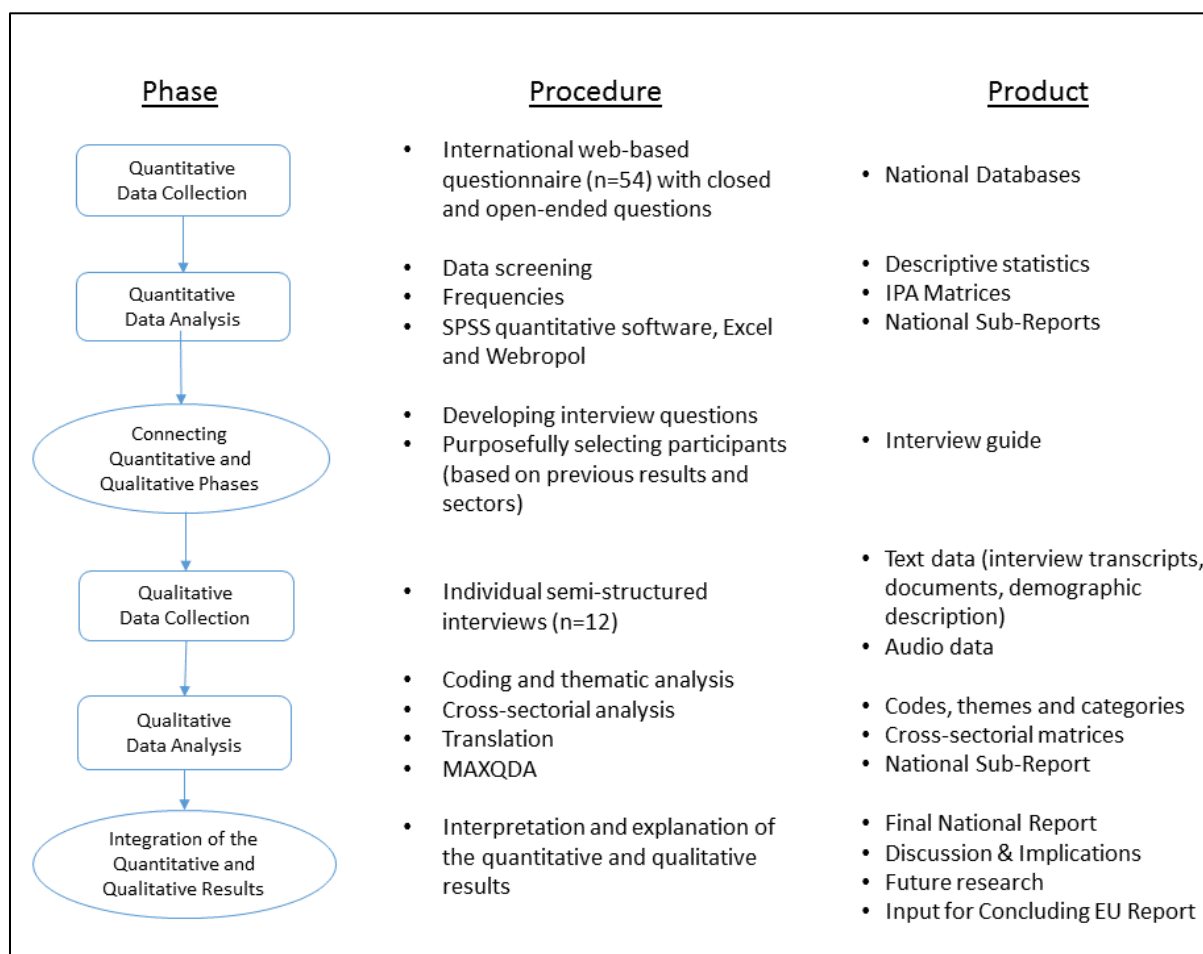


Erasmus+

in the area of sport management. The next chapter will introduce the research methodology and outline the data collection applied in this study.

### ***3 Method and data collection***

The NASME project applied a sequential explanatory design, implying the collection and analysis of first quantitative and then qualitative data in two consecutive periods within one study (Ivankova, Creswell & Stick, 2006). The second period of qualitative data collection built on the results gained in the previous quantitative analysis and aimed at refining and explaining these results in more depth. Figure 3 shows a visual model of the mixed-methods sequential explanatory design procedure applied in the NASME project, which was based on the recommendations given by Ivankova et al. (2006).



*Figure 3: Visual model of mixed-methods sequential explanatory design procedure applied in the NASME project*

### **3.1 Quantitative data collection and analysis**

A web-based questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions was used for the collection of quantitative data in the first period<sup>5</sup>. The quantitative data collection period aimed at examining the current competencies of sport managers working in the field, as well as the future importance of the same competencies for future sport managers. The final standardised questionnaire was divided into five thematic blocks, adapted to the specific conditions of sport management in Germany and translated from English to German by the research team. The first block included questions about the individual and their employment.

<sup>5</sup> In the initial project application, the quantitative data collection phase was divided into two parts. In the first part, the objective was to collect data on current performance concerning specific competencies. In the second part, data on the future importance of these same competencies should have been collected. This approach was opted out due to practical reasons. The project team concluded that the sample size would be impacted negatively from two separate questionnaires. Instead, the quantitative data collection phase was conducted with one questionnaire including both research aims. The questionnaire is available from the authors upon request.

This was followed by questions about changes in working life induced by the global trends commercialisation, digitalisation and internationalisation. The third block included semi-open questions about existing partnerships with universities and recruitment processes applied in the relevant sport organisation. The last two blocks considered sport management competencies. First, respondents were asked to rate their own performance concerning 72 selected competencies on a scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = weak, 5 = excellent). Second, the respondents were asked to evaluate the future importance of the same competencies in the field of sport management on a scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = not at all important, 5 = very important).

Experts in the area of sport management were recruited in advance through purposeful sampling via e-mail or telephone by the national research groups. The experts occupy leading positions in various sport organisations in the pre-defined four sectors: (1) non-profit sport organisations, (2) professional sports clubs, (3) public sector sport organisations and (4) private sports businesses<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, in their respective organisations, they are decision-makers in terms of creating new jobs or functional areas and recruiting sport management graduates who are adequately qualified. It was the goal for each of the nine research teams in the project to recruit 60 experts in their country to participate in the quantitative survey. After approval by the experts, they received a link via e-mail to participate in the survey in the period between December 2017 and January 2018.

The German research team contacted 130 experts from sport organisations in the four sectors mainly via phone and personal contact, as well as e-mail to ask them to participate in the study. The link was sent by e-mail to 103 experts who had agreed to participate in the survey. Within this period of data collection, the researchers sent follow-up e-mails to the experts and contacted them by phone to increase the response rate. The sample included managers, directors, general secretaries, professors and other highly qualified individuals in sport organisations in the different sectors. Table 3 shows the sectors, which the contacted individuals represented with their sport organisations:

*Table 3: Sectors of contacted individuals in Germany (n=103)*

Sector	Number of individuals receiving the link
Public Sector	20
Private Sector	36
Sports Clubs and Federations (regional)	30
National Sport Federations	17

---

<sup>6</sup> Non-profit sport organisations include, for example, sport confederations and federations at national, regional and local level, and non-profit sports clubs. Professional sports clubs include those sports clubs, which employ professional athletes and usually compete in professional sports leagues, such as in football, basketball and handball. Public sector sport organisations include, amongst others, municipalities, governmental authorities and higher education institutions. Private sports businesses include sporting goods manufacturers, sport retailers and wholesalers, and sport marketing agencies.



Finally, 54 contacted sport management experts responded to the survey, which corresponds to a satisfactory response rate of 52 %. Non-respondents mainly reported a lack of time and detailed expertise regarding some of the thematic blocks of the questionnaire as main reasons for not participating in the survey. Moreover, some respondents and non-respondents referred to shortcomings in the questionnaire design in terms of length, structure and focus.

### *Sample*

All 54 respondents (81 % male, 19 % female) live in Germany. There is a tendency to living in the Eastern part of Germany, which can be explained by the location of Leipzig University and the number of sport organisations situated in its surroundings. The median age group is 30-44 years of age, with the minimum age group being 20-24 and the maximum age group being 60-64. Some 85 % of the respondents hold a Bachelor's degree or higher. From this group, 47 % majored in sport management and another 18 % in sport sciences.

It was difficult to identify the sport organisations, which the respondents represented. This can be explained with the heterogeneity of the sport labour market in Germany (see Chapter 2). The respondents represented sport organisations in the four sectors non-profit sport organisations, professional sports clubs, public sector sport organisations and private sports businesses. The distribution of the respondents along the four sectors was very heterogeneous. In the group of non-profit sport organisations, regional (17 %) and national (9 %) sport federations were represented. Some 11 % of the respondents work in non-profit sport associations and another 11 % hold positions in the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) or regional sport confederations (non-profit sport organisations). Some 22 % of the respondents were employed in a professional sports club. In the group of public sector sport organisations, five respondents held positions in universities or similar higher education institutions. Two respondents reported to be employed in a public entity, such as a municipality. Some 11 % of the respondents were working within private sports businesses. Three respondents reported to be self-employed.

In an open-ended question, respondents were asked to specify their job titles. These job titles were classified according to Kent and Chelladurai (2001), and Oja, Bass and Gordon (2015). As a result, half of the respondents were identified to hold top tier management positions, such as general manager, CEO and professor (see Table 4).

*Table 4: Classification of respondents in hierarchical levels (n=54), according to Kent & Chelladurai (2001); Oja, Bass & Gordon (2015)*

Hierarchical level	n	Example
Top Tier	27	General Manager, CEO, Professor
Middle Tier	17	Head of Division, Consultant, Team Leader
Third Tier	10	Sport Manager, Management Assistant, Brand Manager

Quantitative data was analysed using the Microsoft Excel and Webropol software programmes. Furthermore, the results were employed for the developing an Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) using statistical software R (see chapter 4.1.4).

### **3.2 Qualitative data collection and analysis**

After discussing the findings of the quantitative data analysis, both at national level and between all nine research teams, adapted study objectives were determined. It was the objective of the second period to collect qualitative data to gain a deeper understanding of the results of the previous period. In a first step, four central research questions concerning trends, competencies, job development and recruitment were determined based on the study objectives. In a second step, multiple sub-questions for each central question were formulated in order to develop an initial semi-structured interview guide. The interview guide was then reviewed by each of the partners of the NASME Erasmus+ project and revised based upon their feedback. The final interview guide, which formed the basis for qualitative data collection in the nine countries, consisted of 12 open-ended questions, divided into five sections: trends (2 questions), competencies (3 questions), job development (5 questions), recruitment (1 question) and further recommendations (1 question)<sup>7</sup>. In addition, a short questionnaire was prepared to ask for socio-demographic information of the interviewees. In order to consider the specific characteristics of sport management in the nine countries, each project partner was allowed to align the basic interview guide. Each partner conducted the interviews, transcribed the resulting interview material and analysed the interview transcripts.

In Germany, three interviewers conducted 12 interviews (6, 5 and 1 interview(s) individually) between December 2018 and February 2019. The interviews lasted between 34 and 58 minutes. Two research assistants transcribed the interview materials. One researcher, who is also the first author of his report, then proof-checked the interview transcripts. Qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (2010) was performed on the 12 interview transcripts. The first author of this report read the transcripts repeatedly and coded segments using *MAXQDA Analytics Pro 2018* according to theory-based categories (deductive) and new categories, which emerged from the transcribed interview materials (inductive). The qualitative data analysis resulted in 67 specific codes and 927 coded segments<sup>8</sup>. The number of coded segments ranged from 62 to 105 across the 12 interview transcripts (average of 77 coded segments per interview transcript).

In alignment with post-qualitative perspectives on research, it is acknowledged that theory-free knowledge does not exist (Smith & Hodkinson, 2009) and as such, interpretations are partial and situated. The first author of this report has analysed and interpreted the coded segments concerning (1) trends, (2) competencies, and (3) job development, qualification and

---

<sup>7</sup> The interview guide is available from the authors upon request.

<sup>8</sup> Annex 1 gives an overview of the code system.

recruitment. To assure rigour, the first author and three further researchers have critically discussed the coded segments in a small round thereafter, according to the method of “critical friends” (Smith & McGannon, 2018). The role of the critical friend is “not to “agree” or achieve consensus, but rather to encourage reflexivity by challenging each other’s construction of knowledge” (Cowan & Taylor, 2016, 508)<sup>9</sup>.

In order to illustrate the results and their interpretation concerning the coded segments, exemplary quotes were extracted from the interview transcripts. Since all of these quotes have originated in German language, a professional translator has translated them to English language for the purpose of the current report. The first author then reflected the translations critically, in order to maintain the “voice” of the interviewees and avoid possible misunderstandings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; van Nes, Abma, Jonsson & Deeg, 2010). For further publication, it is recommended limiting quotes to a minimum extent in order to avoid possible confusion and frustration of the interviewees, as the words are literally not their own anymore (Temple, 2008).

### *Sample*

Similar to the first period of data collection, it was the objective to recruit individuals for the second period of data collection, who can be regarded as experts in the field of sport management, both from an academic and a practitioner’s perspective. Specifically, two categories of interviewees were considered. The first category included individuals who have already participated in the preceding quantitative surveys. These individuals were chosen, in order to build on their previous responses and gain a deeper understanding regarding the four main themes in the qualitative study. The second category included individuals who did not participate in the quantitative survey. These individuals were selected in order to gain new insights regarding the four main themes. Furthermore, it was ensured that the interviewees represented organisations from the four main sectors of the sport labour market: (1) non-profit sport organisations, (2) professional sports clubs, (3) public sector sport organisations, and (4) private sports businesses. Eleven interviewees were male and one interviewee was female. The interviewees were between 34 and 52 years of age. All interviewees held senior positions in their organisations, such as managing director, CEO, and general secretary. According to the positions in their organisations, these individuals can be considered experts or key informants. Furthermore, organisations, which are representative of the relevant sector of the sport labour market, were considered for the study. The classification scheme developed by Bayle and Robinson (2007) was used to determine organisational size according to the number of paid staff. As a result, six interviewees represented large sport organisations (more than 100 members of paid staff), one interviewee represented a big organisation (41-

---

<sup>9</sup> As self-reflexivity is prescribed by Tracy (2010) within the eight universal criteria for excellent qualitative research, the first author (PhD candidate) sought the support of a senior researcher, a further PhD candidate as well as one research assistant to broaden the horizon of experience and knowledge.

100 members of paid staff), and three interviewees represented medium-sized organisations (11-40 members of paid staff). There was no interviewee representing a small organisation (5-10 members of paid staff). All interviewees held a degree earned from a higher education institution. Two interviewees held a doctoral title. The majority of the interviewees graduated in the field of sport economics and sport management. The interviewees had general work experience of nine to 25 years and specific work experience of three months to 25 years. Table 5 gives an overview of the sample.

Table 5: *Sample description (own illustration)*

Alias	Socio-demographic information							
	Gender	Age	Position	Organisational size*	Education	Educational context	General work experience	Specific work experience
NP1	male	44	General Secretary	big (44 staff)	Diplom	Sport Sciences	14	4
NP2	male	34	Commercial Manager	medium (38 staff)	Magister	Sport & Economics	13	7
NP3	female	48	CEO	large (170 staff)	Diplom	Sport Education	22	1
C1	male	43	Managing Director	large (230 staff)	Bachelor	Economics	20	5
C2	male	52	Managing Director	large (160 staff)	MBA	MBA	25	9
C3	male	37	Managing Director	medium (17 staff)	Diplom	Sport Education	12	12
PU1	male	36	Professor	medium (24 staff)	Dr	Sport Management & Sport Sciences	9	2
PU2	male	50	Freelancer / Head of Department	medium (34 staff)	Diplom	Economics	25	10
PU3	male	44	Professor	large (341 staff)	Dr	Sport Sciences	20	11
P1	male	51	Senior VP	large (57.016 staff)	Diplom	Sport Economics	24	0,25
P2	male	52	Senior Project Manager	large (640 staff)	Diplom	Sport Economics & Sport Education	25	25
P3	male	42	Senior Team Head	large (12.192 staff)	Diplom	Sport Education	13	6

\*Based on Bayle & Robinson (2007), organisational size according to the number of paid staff (5-10 = small, 11-40 = medium, 41-100 = big, > 100 = large).  
NP = Representative of non-profit sport organisation, C = Representative of professional sports club, PU = Representative of public sector sport organisation, P = Representative of private sports business

After having introduced the general method and described the methodological approach and the sample for both periods of data collection and analysis, the general findings and results will be presented in Chapter 4.

## 4 General findings and results

This chapter summarises the findings of the NASME project and is structured in two main parts. The first part focuses on all findings concerning the quantitative data analysis. It focuses on changes in working life, cooperation and recruitment, competencies as well as a sector-specific analysis (based on fastest growing areas, recruitment and competencies). The second part presents the results of the qualitative data analysis concerning the three fields of enquiry for the sport labour market in Germany: (1) trends, (2) competencies, and (3) job development, qualifications and recruitment.

### 4.1 Results from quantitative data analysis

#### 4.1.1 Changes in working life

The first three questions of the questionnaire related to changes in working life asked the respondents whether they believed that commercialisation and internationalisation of sport as well as the development of information technology would have an effect on their particular working environment (Table 6).

Table 6: *Expected future effects on subjective working area (n=54)*

	Yes	No
Commercialisation of sport	96.3 %	3.7 %
Internationalisation of sport	66.0 %	34.0 %
Development of IT	98.1 %	1.9 %

Concerning new professions or occupations in the area of sport management within the next ten years the respondents expect the important functional area of communication management to grow further. More than half of the respondents regard PR and (Social Media) Marketing as a future functional area. Another growing functional area will be Project Management. Table 7 gives an overview of those functional areas that promise to become more important in the future.

Table 7: *Fastest growing functional areas (n=52)*

Functional areas	Mentions (max. 3)
PR & (Social Media-) Marketing	25
Project Management	19
Administration	14
Coaching/Lecturing	11
Sales	10
Digital	9
(Corporate) Social Responsibility	5
Management	3



Internationalisation	3
Assistant Positions	2
HRM	1
Other	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>

The next part of the questionnaire focused on the connectedness to the occupational area of sport management. When asked whether they were aware of other occupational areas in which individuals with sport management education are employed, 55 % of the respondents (n=50) answered with yes. However, there seemed to be some difficulties for the respondents in understanding the question properly. Some respondents answered the open part of this question with sport management areas, others with business positions in general and again others with positions unrelated to the field of sport management. The next question asked the respondents whether they believed that people with sport management education would be working in other occupational areas than sports in the next ten years. Some 79 % of the respondents (n=51) answered with yes. A large part of the open-ended answers can be allocated to general management or business but also social and health related fields.

Concerning the share of female and male employees in managerial positions in the area of sport management, the respondents answered almost unanimously (Table 8).

*Table 8: Distribution of female and male employees in managerial positions in the area of sport management in Germany (n=54)*

	<b>Current Share (Avg.)</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Future share (Avg.)</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
Female employees	20 %	2 %	40 %	30 %	5 %	50 %
Male employees	80 %	60 %	98 %	70 %	50 %	95 %

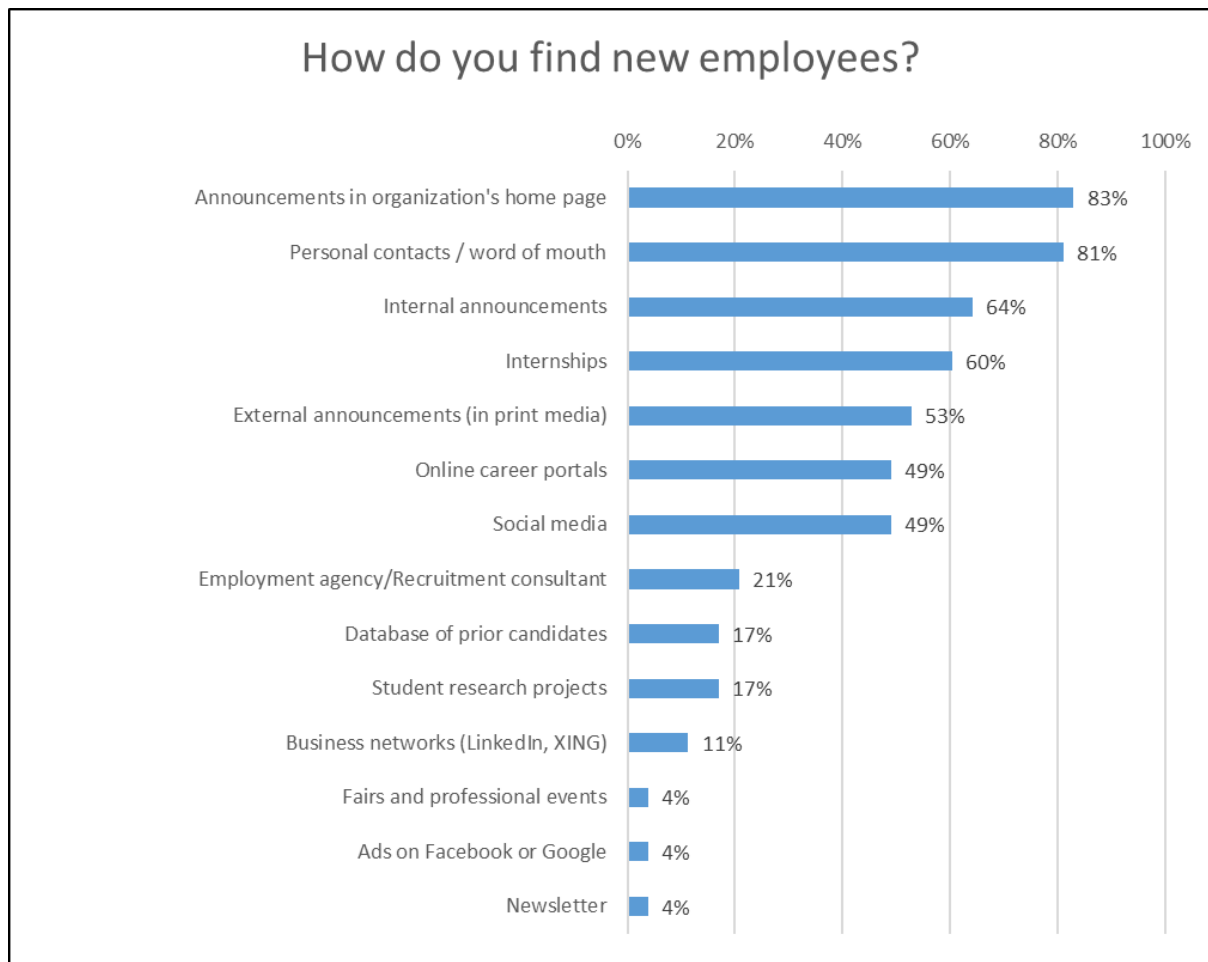
It is striking to notice that only one in five managerial positions in sport management is filled with a woman currently, and it is expected to change only slowly in the next ten years.

#### 4.1.2 Cooperation

Almost half of the respondents reported that their organisation currently cooperates with a higher education institution providing a sport management study programme (52 %). When looking at the arguments of those respondents whose organisations do not currently have a cooperation (n=28), they range from being an educational institution on their own, being too small, not having thought about it, not feeling like they have a necessity up to not knowing why this is the case.

#### 4.1.3 Recruitment

Typical recruitment instruments include personal contacts/word of mouth (n=43), announcements on organisation homepage (n=44), internal announcements (n=34), internships (n=32) and social media (n=26). Figure 4 gives an overview on all recruitment instruments used by the organisations represented by the respondents of the survey.



*Figure 4: Recruitment instruments of German respondents (n=53)*

#### 4.1.4 Competencies

This sub-chapter presents the findings concerning current, future, core and special competencies. The findings are based on mean averages of the variables. However, for better visualisation and clarity, the core and special competencies are presented in diagrams by using their designations only.

Current competencies indicate the self-explicated aptitude of the respondents concerning the 72 competencies of the questionnaire. Future competencies indicate the surmised importance of these same competencies for future sport managers. Next, core competencies



are highlighted, implying those competencies with mean averages of 4.0 and above for both current and future competencies. These competencies show the major strengths in the field of sport management today. Finally, special competencies represent those competencies, which could have room for development in the future. They indicate competencies with a difference of at least 0.5 between future and current competencies. These competencies are then placed within an Importance-Performance-Matrix, in order to derive recommendations for curriculum development of sport management study programmes.

#### *Current competencies of professionals in the area of sport management*

When asked to rate their own current competencies in the area of sport management on a scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1= weak; 5 = excellent), the respondents averaged with all 72 competencies at a mean value of 3.63 (n=53). Table 9 shows the competencies with an average mean value of 4.0 and above (the Top 5 competencies marked with an asterisk).

*Table 9: Top current competencies of professionals in the area of sport management in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.0 and above; n=53)*

<b>Current competencies</b>	<b>Average (1=weak; 5=excellent)</b>
Ability to work autonomously*	4.70
Organisational skills*	4.41
Problem solving skills*	4.37
Desire to succeed*	4.33
Planning skills*	4.28
Capacity to learn	4.26
Teamwork	4.22
Service orientation	4.20
Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	4.17
Strategic planning and development	4.11
Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team	4.09
Project design and management	4.08
Oral communication	4.07
Social intelligence	4.07
Communication skills and management	4.02
Decision making skills	4.00
Capacity to adapt to new situations (Flexibility)	4.00

\* =Top 5 current competencies

From the self-rating of the respondents regarding their current competencies in the area of sport management, it can be concluded that they regard themselves as well qualified for their current jobs. On average, the respondents regard themselves as especially competent with the ability to work autonomously, organisational skills, problem solving skills, the desire to succeed and planning skills.

### *Future competencies of professionals in the area of sport management*

When asked to estimate the importance of competencies in the area of sport management in the future on a scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1= not at all important; 5 = very important), the average result of all 72 competencies was 3.99 (n=51). Table 10 shows the most important future competencies with an average of 4.40 and above (the Top 5 competencies marked with an asterisk).

Table 10: *Top future competencies in the area of sport management in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.40 and above; n=51)*

<b>Future competencies</b>	<b>Average (1=not at all important; 5=very important)</b>
Teamwork*	4.63
Networking*	4.63
Oral communication*	4.58
Decision making skills*	4.58
Capacity for applying knowledge in practice*	4.54
Problem solving skills	4.52
Organisational skills	4.50
Ability to work autonomously	4.46
Digital marketing	4.43
Planning skills	4.43
Leadership skills	4.42
Communication skills and management	4.42
Capacity to learn	4.40

\* =Top 5 future competencies

Out of the 72 different competencies examined within the survey, the so-called “soft skills”, such as teamwork, networking, oral communication, decision-making skills and capacity for applying knowledge in practice are considered most important in the future.

### *Core competencies*

In a next step, the so-called core competencies were identified. These competencies average with mean values of 4.0 and above for both current and future competencies. They can be considered the best performing competencies with sport managers for the time being, and they will continue being particularly important in the future. It could be argued that core competencies are the unique selling propositions (USP) on the contemporary sport labour market and within sport management study programmes.

Altogether, 17 core competencies were identified for the German sample (Table 11):

Table 11: *Core competencies, n=49*

Ability to work autonomously	Teamwork	Oral communication
------------------------------	----------	--------------------



Organisational skills	Service orientation	Social intelligence
Problem solving skills	Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	Communication skills and management
Desire to succeed	Strategic planning and development	Capacity to adapt to new situations (Flexibility)
Planning skills	Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team	Decision making skills
Capacity to learn	Project design and management	

Except for ability to work autonomously and ability to work in an interdisciplinary team as well as desire to succeed, the mean values for importance in the future are higher than for current performance and underscore their unique selling proposition in the sport labour market and their significance for sport management curricula in the future. It is interesting to observe that the majority of the core competencies include generic skills (e.g. socio-communicative competencies) rather than (or on top of) sport management specific methods and professional competencies.

### *Special competencies*

Additionally, 22 so-called special competencies were identified. These competencies are characterised by a difference of more than 0.5 in their mean averages regarding future importance and current performance and have room for further development in the future.

Table 12: *Special competencies, n=49*

	<b>Future</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Digital marketing	4.43	3.17	1.26
Use of virtual media / platforms in work	4.31	3.13	1.18
Use of social media in work	4.27	3.30	0.97
Sales management	4.00	3.15	0.85
Physical activities for the disabled	3.42	2.57	0.85
Ability to utilise big data	3.71	2.87	0.84
Knowledge of a second language	4.10	3.31	0.78
Networking	4.63	3.85	0.78
Business intelligence in sport	3.72	2.94	0.78
Sports related legislation	3.46	2.76	0.70
Customer relations management	4.00	3.31	0.69
Sponsorship management	4.29	3.60	0.69
Critical and self-critical abilities	4.33	3.69	0.64
Marketing	4.24	3.63	0.60
Legacy planning	3.40	2.80	0.60

Decision making skills	4.58	4.00	0.58
Recruitment	3.77	3.20	0.57
Leadership skills	4.42	3.87	0.55
Financial management	3.85	3.30	0.55
Crisis management	3.98	3.47	0.51
Oral communication	4.58	4.07	0.50
Ability to create new products or services	3.86	3.36	0.50

It is striking to see that three of the top five special competencies – digital marketing, use of virtual media/platforms in work and use of social media in work, relate to digitalisation, which is one of the global trends identified in the overall NASME project. In order to make recommendations for curriculum development of sport management study programmes, an Importance-Performance-Analysis (IPA) was performed for the special competencies.

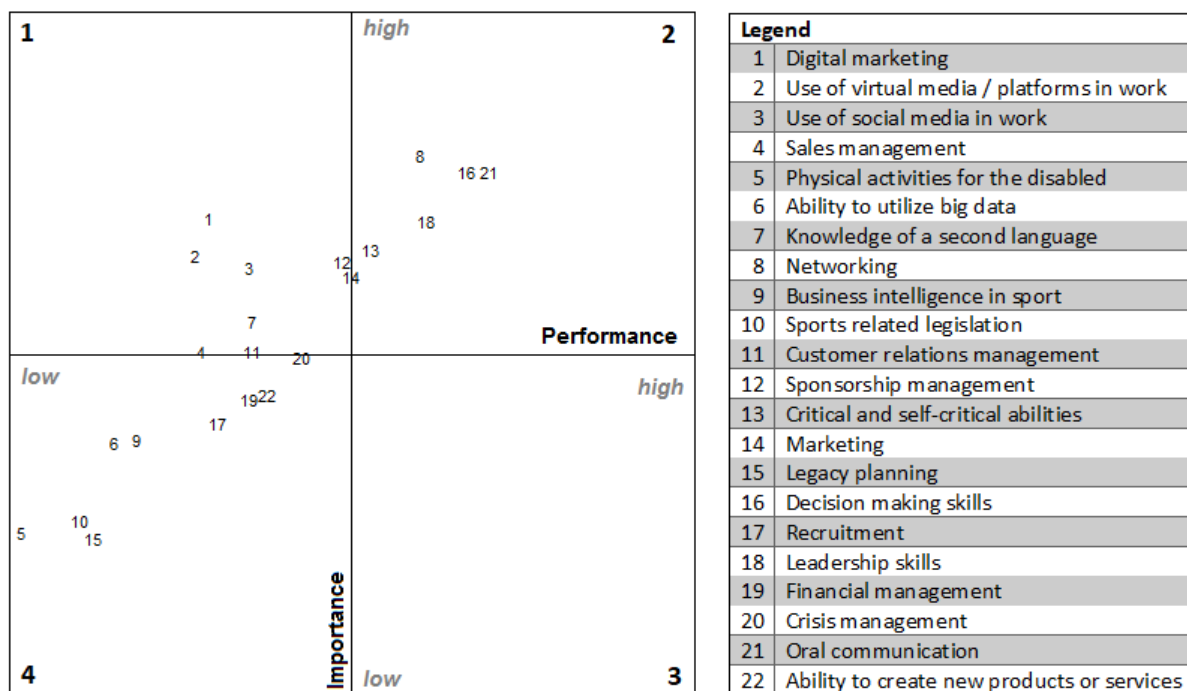
Importance-Performance-Analysis (IPA) is a tool, which has been developed originally by Martilla and James (1977) for the further development of marketing programmes. It applies a two-dimensional grid that allocates specific attributes into one of four quadrants according to their importance (Y-axis) and performance (X-axis). The four quadrants indicate strategic implications for the attributes. Concerning the special competencies identified and examined in the present IPA, the first quadrant (Q1), concentrate here, refers to those competencies that are perceived important for future sport managers, but in which current sport managers do not assess themselves as performing well in their current working environments. These competencies need to be given most attention, when developing sport management study programmes. In the second quadrant (Q2), keep up the good work, competencies are located, which are perceived important for future sport managers and in which current sport managers regard themselves as performing well. The third quadrant (Q3), possible overkill, shows competencies, which are perceived relatively less important in the future, but in which current sport managers assess themselves to perform well. In the fourth quadrant (Q4), low priority, those competencies can be found, for which both importance and performance ratings are lower than the average. These competencies should be given least attention, when developing sport management curricula (Oh, 2001; Wohlfart & Hovemann, 2019).

Self-explicated importance of future competencies on the Y-axis and the respective current performance ratings on the X-axis<sup>10</sup> have been applied in the present IPA. Following Bacon (2003), a data-centred quadrant approach was used, which allocates the cross-point of the

---

<sup>10</sup> Oh (2001) discusses the application of the Importance-Performance-Analysis (IPA) in more detail. In addition, Wohlfart and Hovemann (2019) give recommendations on the application of the tool in higher education, including both the approach applied in the NASME project, but also make suggestions for alternative operationalisations.

matrix to the mean values of importance (3.99) and performance (3.63) respectively. All 22 competencies, for which the difference between future and current competency was above 0.5 have been considered. Figure 5 shows the results of the performed IPA.



*Figure 5: Importance-Performance-Analysis (IPA) of special competencies in sport management (German results; n = 49)*

Based on these results, different implications for curriculum development can be identified. Out of the 22 identified and examined competencies, seven are located within Q1 (concentrate here). Digital marketing, use of virtual media/platforms in work and use of social media in work are most important in the future and need to be improved. No competencies are located in Q3 (possible overkill). This result is not surprising, as the averages of future importance were almost entirely higher than the corresponding performance ratings. The matrix also highlights several other competencies – networking, decision making skills, oral communication and leadership skills – in which sport managers are excelling currently and also need to excel in the future (Q2 – keep up the good work). Q4 shows those competencies, which can be given low priority in developing sport management study programmes at higher education institutions in Germany.

#### 4.1.5 Sector analysis

The sector analysis explores the data for each of the four sectors individually. First, the respondents of each sector are briefly introduced. This is followed by an outline of the fastest growing areas within the sectors, recruitment behaviour and the current, future, core and special competencies within each of the sectors.

The respondents of the survey held different positions in their respective organisation. According to the model by Kent and Chelladurai (2001), and Oja, Bass and Gordon (2015), a distinction can be made between top tier, middle tier and third tier positions.

With 26 out of 54 respondents (48 %), the majority represented non-profit sport organisations. Some 16 individuals (62 %) were classified as top tier managers, holding positions, such as general manager, member of the board or secretary general. Another eight individuals (31 %) occupied middle tier positions, such as project managers and two individuals (7 %) were filling third tier positions, such as assistant positions.

Another 12 respondents of the survey represented professional sport clubs. With five individuals (42 %), the share of top tier managers (mostly general managers or group managers) was lower, as compared with the non-profit-organisations. This was followed by four individuals (33 %) in middle tier management positions and three individuals (25 %) in third tier positions.

Seven respondents represented public sector sport organisations, such as higher education institutions and municipalities. Three respondents (43 %) were professors in higher education institutions, all being chairs of sport management study programmes, and were classified as top tier managers. There was no individual to be regarded as middle tier manager in the sample. Another four individuals (57 %) were classified in third tier positions, such as administrators in municipalities.

A total of nine respondents of the survey represented private sports businesses, such as sport marketing agencies, private fitness clubs or own businesses. Three individuals (33 %) were top tier managers, such as owners and general managers. The highest share of respondents in private sports businesses were classified in middle tier positions, such as branch managers or project managers. Some five individuals (56 %) were holding such positions. Only one individual (11 %) held a third tier position.

Altogether, half of the respondents across all sectors held top tier management positions. These individuals were particularly suitable to assess the current situation of the sport labour market. Furthermore, they were decision-makers in their organisations. Therefore, this study is able to describe a reliable status quo and future developments for professionals in the area of sport management in Germany.

Figure 6 presents the classification of survey respondents in hierarchical levels of their respective organisation in the four sectors being subject to the analysis.

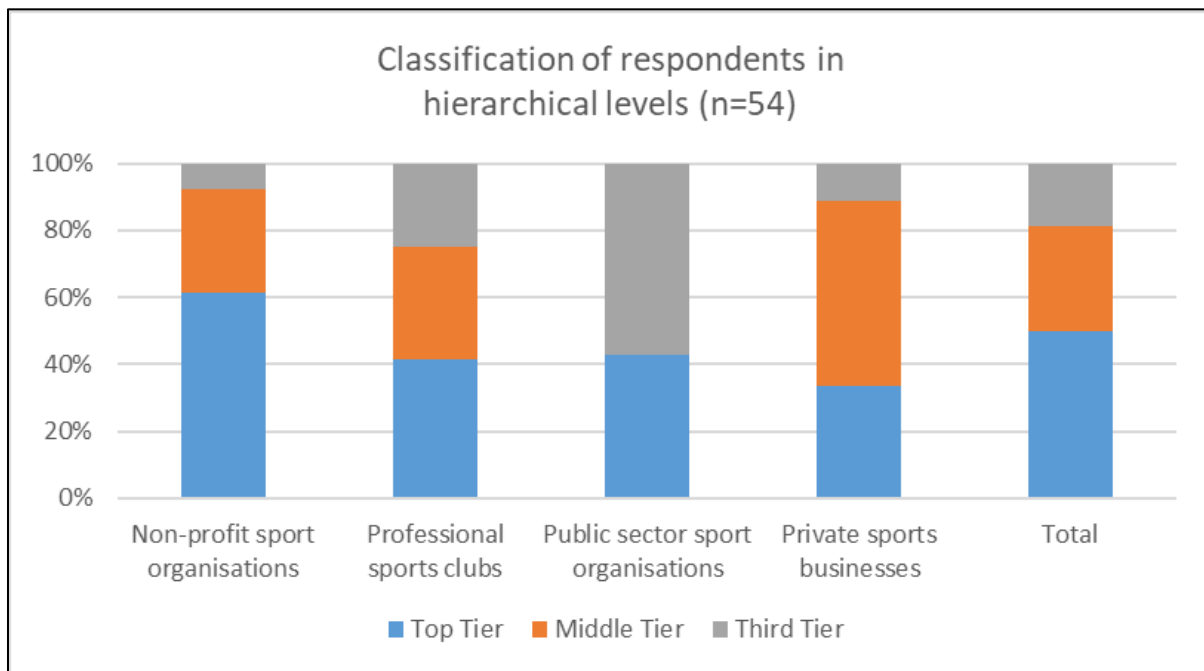


Figure 6: Classification of respondents in hierarchical levels across four sectors (n=54), according to Kent & Chelladurai (2001); Oja, Bass & Gordon (2015)

In the following, the results of the sector analysis for non-profit sport organisations, professional sports clubs, public sector sport organisations and private sports businesses will be presented.

### *Non-profit sport organisations*

The mainstay of sport in Germany is the community sports club, which relies on the support of its members to sustain its activities (member's association). These clubs are either single-sport organisations, such as football or tennis clubs or multifunctional, and provide different sports under one roof. While smaller member-based clubs are mostly managed by volunteers, bigger clubs increasingly hire paid employees. In addition, there are a number of federations at the national, regional and local levels, whose primary role is to provide administrative support to the individual clubs, organise competitions and generally develop the sport they represent (e.g. football) or sport in general. While these organisations have may paid employees, they still rely on a large volunteer workforce to deliver their programmes. The sample for this study included multifunctional grassroots sport clubs with a large membership base as well as national and regional sport federations and confederations.

Some 26 professionals worked within non-profit sport organisations and represented the largest group of the overall sample. The typical respondent is between the age of 40 and 49 years old and male (77 %). He is very likely to have a degree from a higher education institution (89 %).

### Fastest growing areas

Respondents of non-profit sport organisations named coaching/lecturing (10 out of 11 total mentions; 91 %) and project management (12 out of 19 total mentions; 63 %) the fastest growing positions in their area. A similar relevance can be attributed to positions in administration (9 out of 14; 64 %) and PR & (Social Media) Marketing (9 out of the 19; 47 %). Interestingly enough, all five mentions of the functional area of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the overall sample originated in this sector. The growing demand for coaches, administrators, project managers and marketing and PR specialists could be referred to an increasing process of professionalisation of non-profit sport organisations in Germany. Positions in sales (1 out of 10 total mentions, 10 %); digitalisation and IT (2 out of 9 total mentions, 22 %) and internationalisation (1 out of 3 total mentions, 33 %) were regarded as growing positions too, but with less emphasis than in the other sectors being subject of the study. Table 13 gives an overview of the fastest growing functional areas in non-profit-sport organisations in Germany.

Table 13: *Fastest growing functional areas in non-profit sport organisations in Germany (n=26)*

Functional areas	Mentions (max. 3)
PR & (Social Media-) Marketing	9
Project Management	12
Sales	1
Administration	9
Digital	2
Coaching/Lecturing	10
HRM	0
Management	2
(Corporate) Social Responsibility	5
Assistant Positions	2
Internationalisation	1
Other	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>

### Recruitment

A large majority used announcements on the organisation's homepage (96 %) and personal contacts / word of mouth (88 %) as recruitment instruments in non-profit sport organisations. These two recruitment instruments had a higher significance for non-profit sport organisations than for organisations across all sectors (83 % and 81 % respectively). Other recruitment tools were used as well and correspond in most cases to the overall trend across all sectors. Interestingly, the use of social media (54 %) was slightly higher than in all sectors



(49%). In addition, non-profit sport organisations sought for more assistance of employment agencies (31 %) than organisations across all sectors (21 %). Figure 7 gives an overview of the recruitment tools being used in non-profit sector sport organisations.

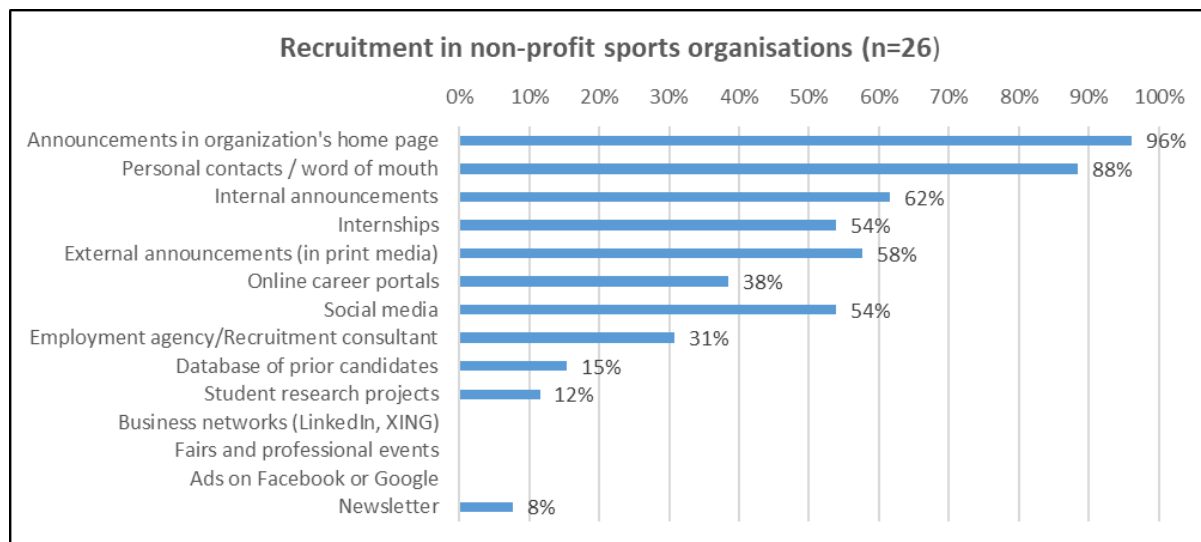


Figure 7: Recruitment in non-profit sport organisations (n=26)

### Competencies

Considering the current competencies that the respondents of the survey reported to possess, a total of 16 competencies stood out. The competencies with the highest mean values were related to the ability to work autonomously (4.69), planning skills (4.38) and the desire to succeed (4.35). This was followed by competencies related to the organisation of sports for all events (4.35) and sales management (4.23). While the former three competencies presented top five competencies across all sectors, the latter two competencies were less emphasised across all sectors. Problem solving skills were more emphasised across all sectors than it was the case for non-profit sport organisations. Table 14 gives an overview of the strongest current competencies of non-profit sport organisation professionals in Germany.

Table 14: *Strongest current competencies of non-profit sport organisation professionals in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.0 and above; n=26)*

	Mean	SD
Ability to work autonomously*	4.69	0.549
Planning skills*	4.38	0.637
Desire to succeed*	4.35	0.745
Organisation of sports for all -events	4.35	0.745
Sales management	4.23	0.710
Strategic planning and development	4.19	0.849
Problem solving skills*	4.16	0.688

Capacity to learn	4.15	0.732
Written communication	4.15	0.732
Physical activities for the disabled	4.15	0.675
Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	4.12	0.766
Stakeholder management	4.12	0.711
Marketing	4.08	0.702
Interest to follow the development of the sport management field	4.00	0.849

\*= Top 5 current competencies in overall sample (see Table 9)

It is also interesting to note the current competencies with the lowest mean values. While it might not be surprising that the respondents rated themselves less competent with the ability to utilise big data (2.92), legacy planning (2.92), sport facility management (2.73) and sport tourism (2.73), it appears to be very surprising that the respondents rated their competencies related to organisational skills low. Organisational skills represented a top five competence in the overall sample. Table 15 gives an overview of the weakest current competencies of non-profit sport organisation professionals in Germany.

Table 15: *Weakest current competencies of non-profit sports organisation professionals in Germany (with an average mean value of 3.0 and below; n=26)*

	Mean	SD
Ability to utilise big data	2.92	1.017
Legacy planning	2.92	0.845
Sport facility management	2.73	1.151
Sport tourism	2.73	0.962
Recruitment	2.73	1.041
Organisational skills*	2.54	0.989

\*= Top 5 current competencies in overall sample (see Table 9)

Some 18 competencies were regarded as very important for sport managers to possess in the future (on average above 4.40). The competencies with the highest future importance, as reported by the respondents of the survey, were related to networking (4.67), marketing (4.61), digital marketing (4.61), strategic planning and development (4.58) and decision-making skills (4.58). Networking and decision-making skills were considered very important for the future across all sectors as well. Table 16 presents the top future competencies according to non-profit sport organisation professionals in Germany.

Table 16: *Top future competencies of non-profit sport organisation professionals in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.4 and above; n=25)*

	Mean	SD
Networking*	4.67	0.565
Marketing	4.61	0.656



Digital marketing	4.61	0.656
Strategic planning and development	4.58	0.654
Decision making skills*	4.58	0.584
Organisation of sports for all -events	4.54	0.658
Capacity for applying knowledge in practice*	4.54	0.509
Use of social media in work	4.52	0.730
Physical activities for the disabled	4.52	0.665
Ability to work autonomously	4.50	0.590
Planning skills	4.50	0.511
Problem solving skills	4.50	0.722
Leadership skills	4.50	0.659
Sales management	4.46	0.658
Capacity to adapt to new situations (Flexibility)	4.46	0.588
Capacity to learn	4.46	0.658
Understanding of cultures and customs	4.43	0.728
Social intelligence	4.42	0.717
Stakeholder management	4.42	0.654
Customer relations management	4.41	0.666

\*= Top 5 future competencies in overall sample (see Table 10)

Only one item appeared to be less important in the future, which was recruitment ( $m=2.96$ ).

Some 16 competencies emerged as core competencies in non-profit sport organisations (mean values of 4.0 and above for both current performance and future importance). Table 17 gives an overview of these 16 core competencies.

Table 17: *Core competencies of non-profit sport organisations*

Ability to work autonomously	Planning skills	Oral communication
Organisational skills	Project design and management	Strategic planning and development
Problem solving skills	Capacity to adapt to new situations (Flexibility)	Communication skills and management
Capacity to learn	Written communication	Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team
Service orientation	Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	
Desire to succeed	Teamwork	

Based on the survey respondents, there emerged 26 special competencies from the analysis for non-profit sport organisations. These competencies are characterised by a difference of

more than 0.5 in their mean averages regarding future importance and current performance and have room for further development in the future. As with the overall sample, three competencies concerning digitalisation were among the top five special competencies. Table 18 gives an overview of special competencies in non-profit-sector sport organisations.

*Table 18: Special competencies of non-profit sport organisations*

	Future		Current		Difference
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Digital marketing	4.54	0.706	3.26	0.903	1.28
Physical activities for the disabled	3.56	0.768	2.41	1.010	1.15
Use of virtual media / platforms in work	4.36	0.757	3.27	1.079	1.09
Sales management	4.08	1.017	3.19	1.075	0.89
Use of social media in work	4.31	0.788	3.44	1.050	0.86
Networking	4.77	0.587	3.93	0.917	0.84
Business intelligence in sport	3.69	0.549	2.88	0.816	0.81
Decision making skills	4.73	0.452	3.93	0.675	0.80
Ability to utilise big data	3.50	1.030	2.74	0.984	0.76
Entrepreneurial spirit	4.27	0.604	3.52	0.893	0.75
Leadership skills	4.50	0.707	3.78	0.751	0.72
Sports related legislation	3.23	0.765	2.52	1.087	0.71
Sponsorship management	4.38	0.804	3.69	0.679	0.69
Customer relations management	4.04	0.889	3.41	0.971	0.63
Financial management	3.85	0.967	3.22	1.121	0.62
Marketing	4.31	0.838	3.70	0.775	0.60
Knowledge of a second language	3.96	0.999	3.37	1.115	0.59
Risk management	3.56	0.768	3.00	0.894	0.56
Sport tourism	2.96	1.060	2.44	0.934	0.52
Crisis management	3.88	0.909	3.37	1.115	0.51
Legacy planning	3.36	0.569	2.85	0.834	0.51
Recruitment	3.65	0.977	3.15	0.907	0.51
Teamwork	4.65	0.562	4.15	0.818	0.51
Communication skills and management	4.54	0.811	4.04	0.958	0.50
Social intelligence	4.46	0.582	3.96	0.808	0.50
Critical and self-critical abilities	4.42	0.578	3.93	0.829	0.50

Project management, PR and (social media) marketing and administration are fast growing positions, and thus give support for an ongoing professionalisation in the non-profit sport

sector in Germany. Teaching and coaching positions as well as positions related to social responsibility are gaining more importance in the sector, as well. This growth may be related to an increasing role of the member's association sport clubs and national and regional federations in integrating new members of society (migrants). This is also reflected in the way that competencies, such as knowledge of a second language and understanding customs and cultures, gain more importance in the future. In addition, networking and (digital) marketing competencies will be very important for future professionals in the sector. However, due to their mostly national or regional spread, internationalisation does not present the same growth opportunities as compared to some of the other sectors. In terms of recruitment, non-profit sport organisations mostly use announcements on the homepage and personal contacts / word of mouth as most preferable instruments from an array of other instruments.

#### *Professional sports clubs*

Professional sports clubs are considered to play and compete in large stadia and arenas, attract thousands of spectators and generate mass media coverage. These clubs hire players and athletes who are paid by the clubs for the provision of their services. In addition, these clubs employ increasingly specialised athlete support personnel, such as coaches, assistant coaches, sport psychologists, sport physicians, and video analysts. In most cases, these professional sports clubs follow a boardroom or corporate management model, with general managers or CEOs at the top of the organisation and highly specialised sport management professionals, such as marketing, operations, finance, and event management in middle and lower management.

The sample in this study included eleven survey respondents from professional sports clubs from football, handball, basketball and ice hockey competing in the top tier leagues. The average respondent in this sector is between 35 and 39 years old and male (92 %). He is likely to have a degree from a higher education institution (75 %).

#### *Fastest growing areas*

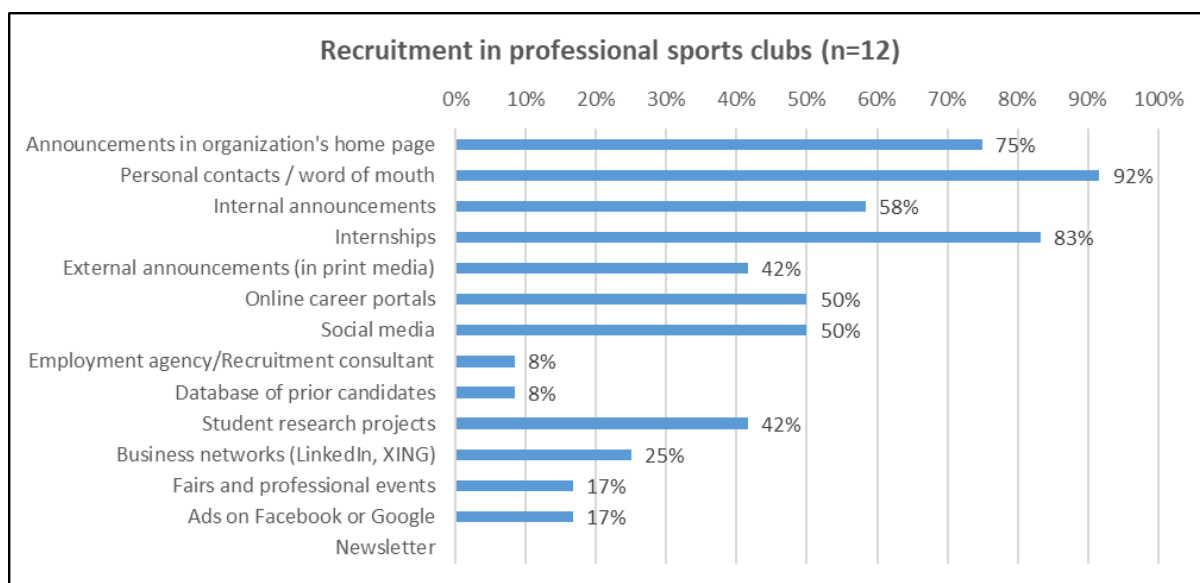
For professional sports clubs, the fastest growing positions emerged in the area of sales and PR and (social media) marketing. Some 8 out of 10 total mentions (80 %) concerning positions in sales and more than half (13 out of 25 total mentions; 52 %) of PR and (social media) marketing positions were reported by respondents from professional sports clubs, demonstrating a high relevance for the sector. In addition, the respondents reported fast growth of positions related to digitalisation and IT (4 out of 9 total mentions, 44 %). It is interesting to note that these individuals perceived project management positions to grow slower than it was the case for all respondents. Furthermore, none of the respondents from professional sports clubs mentioned corporate social responsibility as a fast growing position. Table 19 gives an overview of the fastest growing functional areas according to respondents from professional sports clubs in Germany.

Table 19: *Fastest growing functional areas in professional sports clubs in Germany (n=11)*

Functional areas	Mentions (max. 3)
PR & (Social Media-) Marketing	13
Project Management	1
Sales	8
Administration	2
Digital	4
Coaching/Lecturing	0
HRM	0
Management	0
(Corporate) Social Responsibility	0
Assistant Positions	0
Internationalisation	2
Other	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>

#### Recruitment

A majority of the respondents indicated that personal contacts / word of mouth (92 %) and internships (88 %) are preferred recruitment tools in professional sports clubs. In particular, internships appeared to be a recruitment tool that is relevant for professional sports clubs when compared to all sectors (60 %). As with all sectors, announcements on the organisation's homepage were also popular (75 %). Although their share is comparably low, fairs and professional events (17 %) as well as ads on Google or Facebook (17 %) showed to be more popular for professional sports clubs than for organisations from all sectors. Figure 8 gives an overview of the recruitment tools being used in professional sports clubs.



*Figure 8: Recruitment in professional sports clubs (n=12)*

### Competencies

The respondents explicated to perform particularly well on 21 competencies in their current jobs. The competencies with the highest mean values were related to the ability to work autonomously (4.83), the capacity to learn (4.67) and the capacity to adapt to new situations (4.67). This was followed by competencies related to organisational skills (4.58) and oral communication (4.42). All of the top five current competencies across all sectors appeared among the strongest current competencies of respondents working in professional sports clubs, with the ability to work autonomously at the top. Table 20 gives an overview of the strongest current competencies as reported by respondents from professional sports clubs.

*Table 20: Strongest current competencies according to professionals working in professional sports clubs in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.0 and above; n=11)*

	Mean	SD
Ability to work autonomously*	4.83	0.389
Capacity to learn	4.67	0.492
Capacity to adapt to new situations (Flexibility)	4.67	0.492
Organisational skills*	4.58	0.515
Oral communication	4.42	0.669
Problem solving skills*	4.42	0.515
Teamwork	4.42	0.669
Communication skills and management	4.36	0.924
Strategic planning and development	4.33	0.492
Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	4.33	0.651
Desire to succeed*	4.33	0.778

Planning skills*	4.33	0.492
Service orientation	4.33	0.888
Social intelligence	4.33	0.651
Written communication	4.27	0.647
Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team	4.25	0.754
Project design and management	4.25	0.622
Decision making skills	4.17	0.718
Networking	4.17	0.937
Interest to follow the development of the sport management field	4.08	0.900
Analysing skills	4.08	0.669
Cooperation across different administration sectors	4.08	0.996
Critical and self-critical abilities	4.08	0.900
Knowledge of the changing trends in the society	4.08	0.669

\*= Top 5 current competencies in the overall sample (see Table 9)

It is also interesting to note the current competencies with the lowest mean averages. The respondents from professional sports clubs regarded themselves as not very competent with sports related legislation (2.42), physical activities for the disabled (2.33) and sport tourism (2.33). Table 21 gives an overview of the weakest current competencies as reported by respondents from professional sports clubs.

*Table 21: Weakest current competencies according to professionals working in professional sports clubs in Germany (with an average mean value of 3.0 and below; n=11)*

	Mean	SD
Digital marketing	3.00	0.953
Research skills	3.00	0.953
Ability to utilise big data	2.92	0.900
Business intelligence in sport	2.91	1.044
Sport facility management	2.67	0.985
Legacy planning	2.64	1.027
Sports related legislation	2.42	1.084
Physical activities for the disabled	2.33	0.985
Sport tourism	2.33	0.778

Some 18 competencies were perceived very important for sport managers to possess in the future (on average above 4.40). The competencies with the highest future importance, as reported by the respondents of the survey, were related to networking (5.00), decision-making skills (4.83), teamwork (4.75), the ability to work autonomously (4.67) and oral communication (4.67). It is interesting to note that every single respondent of the survey from professional sports clubs regarded networking as a very important future competency. All of the top future competencies across all sectors appeared among the most important future



competencies in professional sports clubs as well. Table 22 presents the most important future competencies according to the respondents from professional sports clubs in Germany.

*Table 22: Top future competencies according to professionals working in professional sports clubs in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.4 and above; n=11)*

	Mean	SD
Networking*	5.00	0.000
Decision making skills*	4.83	0.389
Teamwork*	4.75	0.452
Ability to work autonomously	4.67	0.492
Oral communication*	4.67	0.492
Capacity for applying knowledge in practice*	4.67	0.492
Problem solving skills	4.67	0.492
Communication skills and management	4.67	0.651
Written communication	4.67	0.651
Social intelligence	4.58	0.515
Critical and self-critical abilities	4.58	0.515
Leadership skills	4.58	0.669
Capacity to adapt to new situations (Flexibility)	4.58	0.515
Organisational skills	4.58	0.515
Capacity to learn	4.50	0.522
Strategic planning and development	4.50	0.522
Digital marketing	4.50	0.674
Planning skills	4.42	0.669
Capacity to generate new ideas (Creativity)	4.42	0.515

\*= Top 5 future competencies in the overall sample (see Table 10)

The respondents perceived three competencies as unimportant in the future: sport facility management (m=2.92), research skills (m=2.67) and sport tourism (m=2.67).

Some 24 competencies emerged as core competencies in professional sports clubs (mean values of 4.0 and above for both current performance and future importance). Table 23 gives an overview of core competencies in professional sports clubs.

*Table 23: Core competencies in professional sports clubs*

Desire to succeed	Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	Organisational skills
Networking	Planning skills	Communication skills and management
Capacity to learn	Capacity to adapt to new situations (Flexibility)	Service orientation

Ability to work autonomously	Marketing	Entrepreneurial spirit
Leadership skills	Problem solving skills	Social intelligence
Teamwork	Concern for quality enhancement	Interest to follow the development of the sport management field
Strategic planning and development	Project design and management	Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team
Decision making skills	Capacity to generate new ideas (Creativity)	Ability to communicate with experts in other fields

Based on the responses of the survey participants, there emerged 20 special competencies in the analysis for professional sports clubs. As with the overall sample, three competencies concerning digitalisation were among the top five special competencies. Table 24 gives an overview of special competencies in professional sports clubs.

Table 24: *Special competencies in professional sports clubs*

	Future		Current		Difference
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Use of virtual media / platforms in work	4.33	0.888	3.23	0.599	1.10
Use of social media in work	4.45	0.688	3.38	0.870	1.07
Digital marketing	4.45	0.688	3.42	1.084	1.04
Knowledge of a second language	4.33	0.985	3.31	1.316	1.03
Recruitment	4.08	0.996	3.23	0.725	0.85
Oral communication	4.75	0.622	3.92	0.641	0.83
Legacy planning	3.50	0.674	2.69	1.032	0.81
Ability to create new products or services	4.27	0.647	3.54	1.050	0.73
Sports related legislation	3.50	1.087	2.77	0.725	0.73
Critical and self-critical abilities	4.33	0.651	3.69	0.480	0.64
Knowledge of the changing trends in the society	4.25	0.622	3.62	0.870	0.63
Change management	4.08	0.900	3.46	0.877	0.62
Ability to utilise big data	3.92	0.793	3.31	0.751	0.61
Networking	4.58	0.669	4.00	0.577	0.58
Sales management	4.00	1.044	3.42	1.165	0.58
Ability to work in an international context	4.33	0.985	3.75	1.288	0.58
Corporate social responsibility (CSR)	4.08	0.900	3.50	1.000	0.58

Written communication	4.33	0.888	3.77	0.725	0.56
IT-skills	3.92	0.996	3.38	0.961	0.53
Customer relations management	4.18	0.751	3.67	0.888	0.52

The fastest growing positions in professional sports clubs can be found in the area of sales, PR and social media marketing, as well as in digitalisation and IT. In terms of recruitment instruments, personal contacts and internships as well as the use of the organisation's homepage and social media channels are popular recruitment instruments for professional sports clubs. When it comes to the biggest gaps between current competencies possessed and future competencies needed, competencies related to digitalisation and IT range at the top. It is also noteworthy that for professional sports clubs networking is regarded as the most important future competency in the area of sport management.

#### *Public sector sport organisations*

The role of the public sector in German sport is to provide an economic and cultural infrastructure, for example through the provision of municipal sports facilities and to give people a better quality of life by building education institutions and health systems. The direct role of the public sector in sport is low. For example, there exists no ministry of sport.

The sample in this study consisted of seven survey respondents working in universities or similar higher education institutions as well as in municipalities. The average survey respondent from the public sector was between 45 and 49 years old and male (100 %). All seven respondents had a degree from a higher education institution.

#### *Fastest growing areas*

Due to the small sample size, it was difficult to draw valid conclusions for the fastest growing areas within the public sport sector. Out of eleven total mentions, the respondents surmised each project management (3; 27 %) and administration (3; 27 %) to grow in the next years. Table 25 gives an overview of the fastest growing functional areas in the public sport sector in Germany.

Table 25: *Fastest growing functional areas in public sector sport organisations in Germany (n=7)*

Functional areas	Mentions (max. 3)
PR & (Social Media-) Marketing	0
Project Management	3
Sales	0
Administration	3
Digital	0



Coaching/Lecturing	1
HRM	0
Management	0
(Corporate) Social Responsibility	0
Assistant Positions	0
Internationalisation	0
Other	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>

## Recruitment

It is interesting to note that all respondents from the public sport sector stated that their organisations used internal announcements as recruitment tools. Moreover, most organisations used announcements on their homepage (83 %) and external announcements (67 %) for recruiting new staff. Figure 9 gives an overview of the recruitment tools being used in the public sport sector in Germany.

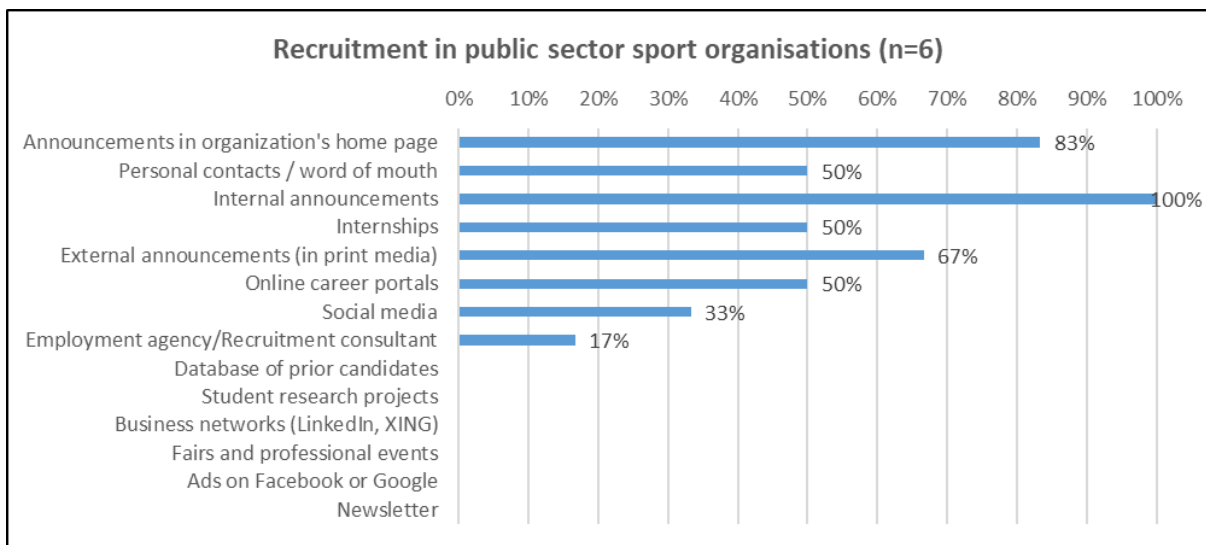


Figure 9: Recruitment in public sector sport organisations (n=6)

## Competencies

The respondents from public sector sport organisations explicated to perform particularly well on 13 competencies in their current jobs. The competencies with the highest mean values were related to the ability to work autonomously (4.57), organisational skills (4.57) and planning skills (4.57). Four of the top five current competencies in the public sport sector can also be found among the top five current competencies overall. Table 26 gives an overview of the strongest current competencies according to the respondents from sport organisations in the public sector in Germany.

Table 26: *Strongest current competencies according to professionals working in public sector sport organisations in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.0 and above; n=7)*

	Mean	SD
Ability to work autonomously*	4.57	0.535
Organisational skills*	4.57	0.535
Planning skills*	4.57	0.787
Problem solving skills*	4.29	0.756
Capacity to learn	4.29	0.488
Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team	4.14	0.378
Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	4.14	0.900
Ethical commitment	4.14	0.900
Teamwork	4.14	0.900
The significance of sport and physical activity in the society	4.14	0.690
Ability to make conclusions from research data	4.00	1.000
Analysing skills	4.00	0.816
Concern for quality enhancement	4.00	0.816
Data management skills	4.00	0.816
Decision making skills	4.00	0.816
Desire to succeed*	4.00	0.577
Understanding of cultures and customs	4.00	1.155
Written communication	4.00	0.577

\*= Top 5 current competencies in the overall sample (Table 9)

It is also interesting to look at the current competencies with the lowest mean averages (below 3.0). The survey respondents from the public sector showed a tendency to be more critical with themselves than it appeared to be the case in the other sectors. Therefore, the list of low current competencies is much longer (see Table 27). While lower performance in business related competencies, such as in sales management (1.71) and in business intelligence in sports (1.86) did not surprise, the lack of knowledge concerning sport facility management (1.71) was surprising. However, as mentioned above, the small sample size did not allow for representative statements about current competencies in the public sport sector.

Table 27: *Weakest current competencies according to professionals working in public sector sport organisations in Germany (with an average mean value of 3.0 and below; n=7)*

	Mean	SD
Basic general knowledge of sport management profession	3.00	1.732
Entrepreneurial spirit	3.00	1.633
Ability to create new products or services	3.00	1.291
Sports related legislation	3.00	1.155
Capacity to generate new ideas (Creativity)	2.86	1.069

Recruitment	2.86	0.900
Stakeholder management	2.86	1.215
Elite sports event management	2.71	1.380
Use of virtual media / platforms in work	2.71	0.488
Sponsorship management	2.57	1.134
Risk management	2.57	1.134
Sport tourism	2.57	1.272
Use of social media in work	2.43	0.976
Corporate social responsibility (CSR)	2.43	1.618
Marketing	2.43	1.134
Customer relations management	2.29	0.951
Legacy planning	2.14	0.690
Digital marketing	2.00	1.155
Business intelligence in sport	1.86	0.690
Sales management	1.71	1.113
Sport facility management	1.71	0.951

The respondents perceived only three competencies to be very important for sport managers in the public sector to possess in the future (on average above 4.40). Teamwork was one of the three competencies, which were also considered very important for the future across all sectors. Table 28 presents the top future competencies according to respondents from the public sport sector in Germany.

*Table 28: Top future competencies according to professionals working in public sector sport organisations in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.4 and above; n=7)*

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Problem solving skills	4.43	0.787
Teamwork*	4.43	0.787
Leadership skills	4.43	0.787

\*= Top 5 future competencies in the overall sample (Table 10)

On the other hand, the respondents regarded three competencies as unimportant in the future. The fact surprised that research skills and sport tourism were both found to be unimportant competencies in the future. Table 29 presents the low future competencies according to respondents from public sector sport organisations in Germany.

*Table 29: Low future competencies according to professionals working in public sector sport organisations in Germany (with an average mean value of 3.0 and below; n=7)*

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Research skills	3.00	1.000



Legacy planning	2.71	0.756
Sport tourism	2.57	0.976

Only ten competencies emerged as core competencies in public sector sport organisations (mean values of 4.0 and above for both current performance and future importance). Table 30 gives an overview of core competencies in the public sport sector.

Table 30: *Core competencies in public sector sport organisations*

Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	Planning skills	Data management skills
Problem solving skills	Capacity to learn	Ethical commitment
Teamwork	Volunteer management	
Organisational skills	Ability to work autonomously	

Interestingly, there emerged 45 special competencies in the analysis for public sector sport organisations. As with the overall sample, three competencies concerning digitalisation were among the top five special competencies. Furthermore, there emerged six special competencies with higher mean values for current performance than for future importance (and a difference > 0.5). This is a unique finding, as in the overall sample special competencies included higher mean values for future importance as compared with current performance. Table 31 gives an overview of special competencies in public sector sport organisations.

Table 31: *Special competencies in public sector sport organisations*

	Future		Current		Difference
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Ability to utilise big data	4.20	0.837	1.80	1.095	2.40
Use of virtual media / platforms in work	4.20	0.447	1.80	1.304	2.40
Sponsorship management	4.40	0.894	2.40	1.140	2.00
Sports related legislation	4.20	0.837	2.20	0.837	2.00
Use of social media in work	4.20	0.447	2.20	1.095	2.00
Sport facility management	3.80	0.837	1.80	0.837	2.00
Recruitment	3.60	0.894	2.00	1.414	1.60
Digital marketing	4.20	0.837	2.80	0.837	1.40
Marketing	3.80	0.837	2.40	1.342	1.40
Sales management	3.60	1.140	2.20	1.304	1.40
Interest to follow the development of the sport management field	4.60	0.548	3.20	1.483	1.40



Written communication	4.40	0.894	3.20	1.095	1.20
Crisis management	4.20	0.837	3.00	2.000	1.20
Basic general knowledge of sport management profession	3.80	1.304	2.60	1.817	1.20
Communication skills and management	4.40	0.548	3.40	0.894	1.00
Networking	4.20	0.837	3.20	0.837	1.00
Knowledge of a second language	3.80	1.095	2.80	1.304	1.00
Knowledge of the changing trends in the society	3.80	0.837	2.80	1.304	1.00
Knowledge of welfare policies	3.60	0.894	2.60	1.140	1.00
Oral communication	4.40	0.894	3.60	0.548	0.80
Strategic planning and development	4.20	0.837	3.40	1.342	0.80
Capacity to generate new ideas (Creativity)	3.60	0.548	2.80	1.095	0.80
Environmental concern	3.20	0.447	2.40	1.140	0.80
Leadership skills	4.60	0.548	3.80	0.837	0.80
Elite sports event management	4.00	1.225	3.20	1.304	0.80
IT-skills	4.00	1.000	3.20	1.304	0.80
Change management	3.80	0.837	3.00	1.000	0.80
Knowledge of health issues	3.40	0.894	2.60	0.894	0.80
Decision making skills	4.40	0.548	3.80	0.837	0.60
Financial management	4.20	0.837	3.60	0.894	0.60
Human resource management	4.20	0.837	3.60	1.140	0.60
Organisation of sports for all -events	4.20	0.837	3.60	1.140	0.60
Project design and management	4.20	0.837	3.60	1.140	0.60
Physical activities for the disabled	3.40	1.140	2.80	1.483	0.60
Teamwork	4.60	0.548	4.00	1.000	0.60
Capacity to adapt to new situations (Flexibility)	3.80	0.837	3.20	1.304	0.60
Knowledge of the people's need for physical activity	3.80	0.837	3.20	1.304	0.60
Ability to work autonomously	4.00	0.707	4.60	0.548	-0.60
Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team	3.40	0.548	4.00	0.000	-0.60
Legacy planning	2.60	0.894	3.20	1.483	-0.60
The significance of sport and physical activity in the society	3.20	0.837	4.00	0.707	-0.80
Sport tourism	2.60	1.140	3.40	1.140	-0.80
Understanding of cultures and customs	3.20	1.483	4.20	0.837	-1.00

Since the sample size of respondents from public sector sport organisations was small, caution is advised when drawing conclusions from the findings presented above. The analysis of competencies showed lower averages as compared with the overall sample. However, the overall trends can be confirmed for the public sport sector. Digitalisation will have a great



effect on the public sport sector as well. Hence, digital competencies will become vitally important in the future in this sector. However, as compared with the other sectors, the respondents from the public sport sector see a greater need in further developing specific rather than generic competencies.

#### *Private sports businesses*

Private sports businesses in Germany include for example commercial leisure centres that provide sport-related services – in particular fitness programmes – on a fee-for-service or user-pay principle. Gymnasias and swimming pools in Germany are either privately owned or municipality owned. In addition, with the commercialisation of sport, there is an increasing number of sport marketing agencies and consultancies.

The sample for private sports businesses included nine survey respondents working mostly within fitness clubs and sport marketing agencies. The typical survey respondent is 45 to 49 years old and often male (67 %). He is very likely to have a degree from a higher education institution (85 %).

#### *Fastest growing areas*

Due to the small sample size, it was difficult to draw valid conclusions for the fastest growing areas within private sports businesses. The nine respondents made 13 references regarding fast growing areas. Most of these references concern the functional areas of PR & (social media) marketing, project management and digitalisation. Table 32 gives an overview of the fastest growing functional areas in private sports businesses in Germany.

*Table 32: Fastest growing functional areas in private sports businesses in Germany (n=9)*

Functional areas	Mentions (max. 3)
PR & (Social Media-) Marketing	3
Project Management	3
Sales	1
Administration	0
Digital	3
Coaching/Lecturing	0
HRM	1
Management	1
(Corporate) Social Responsibility	0
Assistant Positions	0
Internationalisation	0
Other	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>

## Recruitment

According to the survey respondents, online career portals (78 %), personal contacts / word of mouth (67 %) and internal announcements (67 %) were the recruitment tools most commonly used in the private sports businesses that they represented. Figure 10 gives an overview of the recruitment tools being used in private sports businesses in Germany.

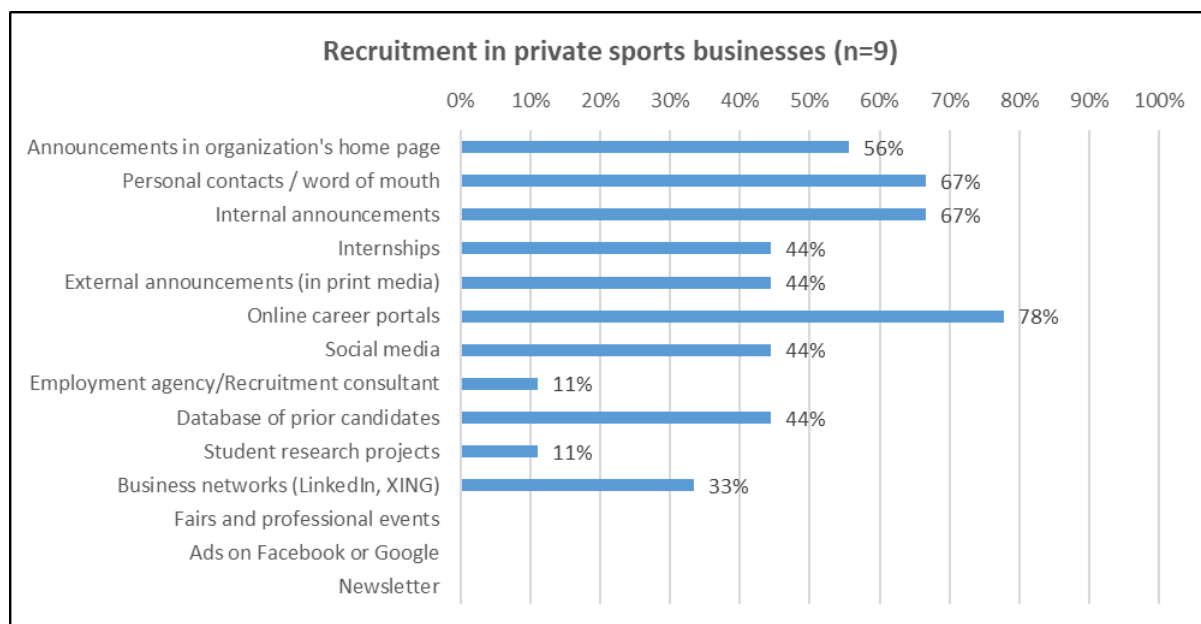


Figure 10: Recruitment in private sports businesses (n=9)

## Competencies

The respondents from private sports businesses explicated to perform particularly well on 21 competencies in their current jobs (mean average of 4.0 and above). The competencies with the highest mean values were related to the ability to work autonomously (4.67), social intelligence (4.56) and the desire to succeed (4.56). Three of the five most important current competencies can also be found in the five most important current competencies overall. Table 33 gives an overview of the strongest current competencies according to respondents working in private sports businesses in Germany.

Table 33: *Strongest current competencies according to professionals working in private sports businesses in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.0 and above; n=9)*

	Mean	SD
Ability to work autonomously*	4.67	0.500
Social intelligence	4.56	0.527
Desire to succeed*	4.56	1.014
Oral communication	4.33	0.707
Planning skills*	4.33	0.500

Problem solving skills*	4.33	0.500
Service orientation	4.22	0.667
Organisational skills*	4.22	0.667
Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team	4.22	0.667
Ability to communicate with experts in other fields	4.22	0.667
Teamwork	4.11	0.333
Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	4.11	0.782
Concern for quality enhancement	4.11	0.782
Strategic planning and development	4.11	0.928
Ethical commitment	4.00	1.000
Cooperation across different administration sectors	4.00	0.707
Capacity to learn	4.00	0.707
Communication skills and management	4.00	0.707
Community life in general	4.00	0.535
Understanding of cultures and customs	4.00	1.000
Organisation of sports for all -events	4.00	0.866

\*= Top 5 current competencies in the overall sample (Table 9)

It is also interesting to look at the current competencies with low mean averages (3.0 and below). Digital competencies were perceived to be the weakest points on the part of the survey respondents from private sports businesses. Table 34 gives an overview of the weakest current competencies in private sports businesses in Germany.

Table 34: *Weakest current competencies according to professionals working in private sports businesses in Germany (with an average mean value of 3.0 and below; n=9)*

	Mean	SD
Data management skills	3.00	0.707
Sport facility management	3.00	0.866
IT-skills	3.00	0.866
Business intelligence in sport	2.89	1.054
Use of virtual media / platforms in work	2.75	0.707
Physical activities for the disabled	2.56	1.130
Ability to utilise big data	2.38	0.744

The respondents perceived numerous competencies to be very important for sport managers to possess in the future (on average above 4.40). The respondents from private sports businesses allocate a strong importance to the most important overall future competencies: teamwork (4.78), capacity for applying knowledge in practice (4.56), networking (4.50), oral communication (4.44) and decision-making skills (4.44). In addition, ethical commitment (4.67), social intelligence (4.56), and service orientation (4.56) were reported to be of high importance in the future. Table 35 presents the top future competencies according to the respondents from private sports businesses in Germany.

Table 35: *Top future competencies according to professionals working in private sports businesses in Germany (with an average mean value of 4.4 and above; n=9)*

	Mean	SD
Teamwork*	4.78	0.667
Ethical commitment	4.67	0.707
Social intelligence	4.56	0.527
Service orientation	4.56	0.726
Capacity for applying knowledge in practice*	4.56	0.527
Networking*	4.50	0.756
Ability to work autonomously	4.44	0.726
Oral communication*	4.44	0.527
Planning skills	4.44	0.527
Problem solving skills	4.44	0.726
Organisational skills	4.44	0.527
Concern for quality enhancement	4.44	0.726
Decision making skills*	4.44	0.527
Critical and self-critical abilities	4.44	0.527
Cooperation across different administration sectors	4.44	0.726

\*= Top 5 future competencies in the overall sample (Table 10)

There appeared to be only one unimportant future competence: research skills (m=2.78; SD=0.667).

Some 19 competencies emerged as core competencies in private sports businesses (mean values of 4.0 and above for both current performance and future importance). Table 36 gives an overview of core competencies in private sports businesses.

Table 36: *Core competencies in private sports businesses*

Teamwork	Planning skills	Strategic planning and development
Ethical commitment	Problem solving skills	Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team
Social intelligence	Organisational skills	Desire to succeed
Service orientation	Concern for quality enhancement	Ability to communicate with experts in other fields
Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	Cooperation across different administration sectors	Community life in general
Ability to work autonomously	Capacity to learn	
Oral communication	Communication skills and management	

Based on the responses of the survey participants, there emerged 26 special competencies in the analysis for private sports businesses. As with the overall sample, three competencies concerning digitalisation were among the top five special competencies. Table 37 gives an overview of special competencies in the private sector.

*Table 37: Special competencies in private sports businesses*

	Future		Current		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Difference
Use of virtual media / platforms in work	4.22	0.833	2.75	0.707	1.47
Ability to utilise big data	3.75	1.165	2.38	0.744	1.38
Critical and self-critical abilities	4.44	0.527	3.22	0.667	1.22
Knowledge of a second language	4.33	0.500	3.11	1.167	1.22
Digital marketing	4.22	0.833	3.13	0.641	1.10
IT-skills	4.00	0.707	3.00	0.866	1.00
Business intelligence in sport	3.88	0.835	2.89	1.054	0.99
Physical activities for the disabled	3.44	0.726	2.56	1.130	0.89
Customer relations management	4.00	0.926	3.13	0.991	0.88
Sport tourism	4.00	0.535	3.13	0.835	0.88
Capacity to generate new ideas (Creativity)	4.33	0.707	3.56	1.014	0.78
Use of social media in work	4.00	1.118	3.25	1.165	0.75
Networking	4.50	0.756	3.75	1.035	0.75
Teamwork	4.78	0.667	4.11	0.333	0.67
Ethical commitment	4.67	0.707	4.00	1.000	0.67
Data management skills	3.63	1.061	3.00	0.707	0.63
Management with focus on values, ethics and culture	4.22	0.833	3.63	0.916	0.60
Legacy planning	3.88	0.835	3.29	1.380	0.59
Analysing skills	4.33	0.500	3.78	0.667	0.56
Decision making skills	4.44	0.527	3.89	0.601	0.56
Ability to work in an international context	4.33	0.707	3.78	1.202	0.56
Knowledge of welfare policies	4.00	0.756	3.44	0.527	0.56
Sports related legislation	3.67	0.866	3.11	1.054	0.56
Corporate social responsibility (CSR)	4.13	0.835	3.57	0.976	0.55
Crisis management	3.89	0.782	3.38	0.518	0.51

Sales management	4.00	0.866	3.50	1.309	0.50
------------------	------	-------	------	-------	------

Similar to the public sector, the sample size of respondents from private sports businesses was small. Therefore, it is advised to be cautious when drawing conclusions from the results presented above for private sports businesses. However, the emerging digitalisation processes can be found again for this small sample. In addition, it is also interesting to highlight ethical commitment, social intelligence and a general service orientation as very important future competencies for sport managers. These findings are further supported by the high degree of generic competences among the core competencies for private sports businesses.

#### *Concluding remarks sector analysis*

After a detailed analysis of the four sectors non-profit sport organisations, professional sports clubs, public sector sport organisations and private sports businesses, the major findings will be presented in this chapter.

#### *Fastest growing areas*

The fastest growing functional areas are related to PR and (social media) marketing. Apart from the public sector sport organisations, all other sectors report a growth of such positions, in particular in professional sports clubs and non-profit sport organisations. There is also a strong need for new positions in project management, administration and coaching/teaching in non-profit sport organisations, which can be referred to an intensifying professionalisation of non-profit sport organisations on all hierarchical levels, from national federations to individual member's association sports clubs. Sales positions grow fast in professional sports clubs. This might be associated to a trend that these clubs aim to sell their services more independently, rather than using the services of external sport marketing agencies. However, qualitative evidence would be needed in order to understand if such a trend emerges. In addition, there is an increasing job growth in positions related to digitalisation and IT, in particular with professional sports clubs and private sports businesses. Public sector institutions report growth in the areas of administration and project management. However, it is difficult to draw general conclusions for this sector, due to the small sample size.

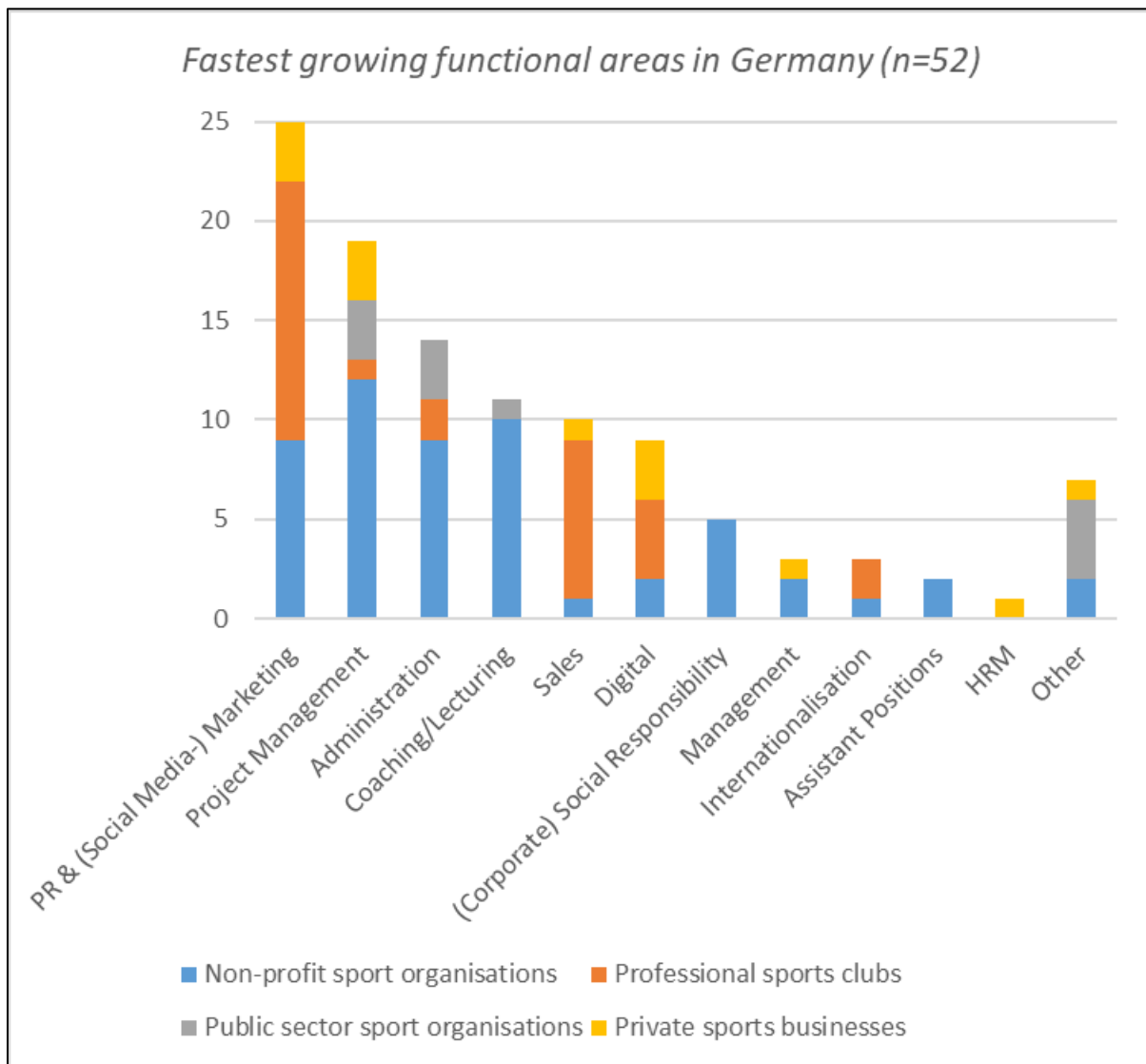


Figure 11: Fastest growing functional areas in Germany (n=52)

## Recruitment

In terms of recruitment instruments, announcements on the organisation's homepage are very popular across all sectors. In non-profit sport organisations, it is the most popular way of recruiting new employees. Personal contacts and word-of-mouth can be regarded as a worthwhile way of finding new employees, as it's both cost-efficient and more prospective, as new candidates are recommended or already known to the organisation. Personal contacts / word-of-mouth represent the most popular recruitment instrument for professional sports clubs and are very popular with non-profit sport organisations as well. Internal recruiting is most popular in public sector sport organisations, whereas organisations from the other three sectors appear to recruit internally to a lesser extent. Internships as a recruitment instrument can have similar advantages as personal contacts / word-of-mouth in terms of recruitment.

For many sport management students, an internship is mandatory at Bachelor's and/or Master's level. Therefore, sport organisations from all sectors are advised to increasingly use internships as a way of recruiting new employees. Internships represent the second most popular recruitment instrument for professional sports clubs and are popular with private sports business as well. Private sports business recruit predominantly through online career portals. The use of social media to recruit new employees is an instrument that about half of the organisations from all sectors use.

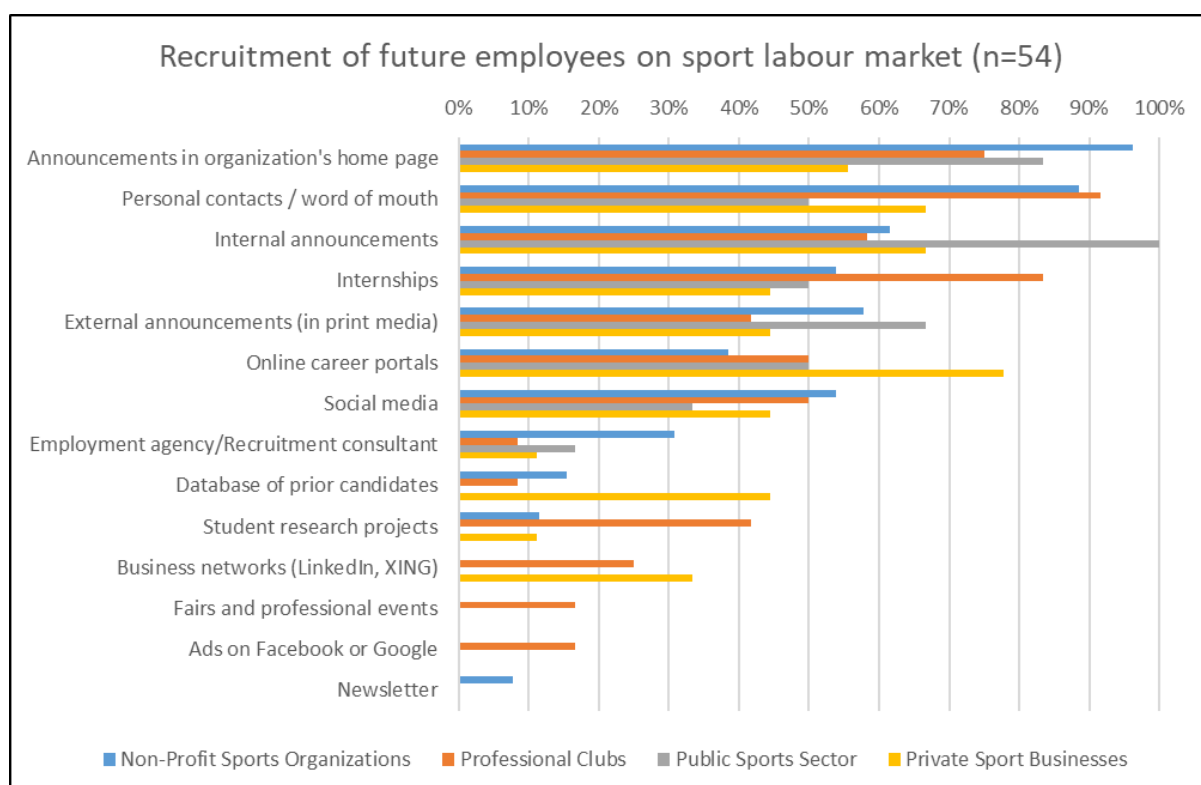


Figure 12: Recruitment of future employees on sport labour market (n=54)

## Competencies

### Strongest current competencies

When looking at the competencies that the respondents of the survey currently possess, the ability to work autonomously clearly stands out. It is the strongest competency in all sectors. This is followed by organisational skills for all sectors, and particularly strong in public sector sport organisations and professional sports clubs. For all sectors, problem-solving skills rank third for all sectors and are particularly emphasised in public sector sport organisations. The fourth strongest current competency is the desire to succeed for all sectors and a particularly strong competency in private sports businesses. Planning skills rank fifth in total, and are emphasised in particular in non-profit sport organisations, public sector sport organisations and private sports businesses. It can be concluded that the strongest competencies possessed



are more social or personal, rather than subject-specific competencies. Table 38 shows the strongest current competencies possessed by the respondents of the survey across all sectors and for the four sectors separately.

Table 38: *Strongest current competencies according to sectors*

Overall	Non-profit sport organisations	Professional sports clubs	Public sector sport organisations	Private sports businesses
Ability to work autonomously	Ability to work autonomously	Ability to work autonomously	Ability to work autonomously	Ability to work autonomously
Organisational skills	Planning skills	Capacity to learn	Organisational skills	Social intelligence
Problem solving skills	Desire to succeed	Capacity to adapt to new situations (Flexibility)	Planning skills	Desire to succeed
Desire to succeed	Organisation of sports for all - events	Organisational skills	Problem solving skills	Oral communication
Planning skills	Sales management	Oral communication	Capacity to learn	Planning skills

### Most important future competencies

Having regard to the competencies that the respondents of the survey estimate to be particularly important for future sport management professionals, teamwork is most important for all sectors. Teamwork will also be the most competency in private businesses. Networking ranks second for all sectors and is regarded as the most important future competency according to the respondents from non-profit sport organisations and professional sports clubs. Oral communication ranks third and is estimated to be very important by respondents from professional sports clubs in particular. These are followed by decision-making skills, which are regarded very important by professional sports clubs and non-profit sport organisations in particular. The capacity of applying knowledge in practice ranks fifth for all sectors and is considered very important in public sector sport organisations and private sports businesses. As with the current competencies, also the most important future competencies are more of a social and personal rather than a subject-specific nature. Table 39 shows the most important future competencies according to the respondents of the survey across all sectors and for the four sectors separately.

Table 39: *Most important future competencies according to sectors*

Overall	Non-profit sport organisations	Professional sports clubs	Public sector sport organisations	Private sports businesses
Teamwork	Networking	Networking	Problem solving skills	Teamwork



Networking	Marketing	Decision making skills	Teamwork	Ethical commitment
Oral communication	Digital marketing	Teamwork	Leadership skills	Social intelligence
Decision making skills	Strategic planning and development	Ability to work autonomously	Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	Service orientation
Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	Decision making skills	Oral communication	Organisational skills	Capacity for applying knowledge in practice

## Most important core competencies

Core competencies (with mean values of 4.0 or above for both current and future competencies) represent the unique selling propositions (USP) on the contemporary sport labour market and within sport management study programmes. The ability to work autonomously stands out in the overall sample and in all sectors except for public sector sport organisations. In this context, organisational skills are equally important, ranking second in the overall sample and represented in the top five core competencies in non-profit and public sector sport organisations. Problem-solving skills are in the third position in the overall sample. In private sports business this competency is not considered as important as in the other three sectors. Teamwork, which is regarded the most important future competency, ranks fourth among the core competencies and represents one of the most important core competencies in all four sectors. Planning skills rank fifth for all sectors and are considered most important in non-profit and public sector sport organisations. Since core competencies represent those competencies, which are strong current competencies and important future competencies, it is not surprising that mostly social and personal competencies rank among the most important core competencies. Table 40 shows the most important core competencies according to the respondents of the survey across all sectors and for the four sectors separately.

Table 40: *Most important core competencies according to sectors*

Overall	Non-profit sport organisations	Professional sports clubs	Public sector sport organisations	Private sports businesses
Ability to work autonomously	Ability to work autonomously	Ability to work autonomously	Organisational skills	Social intelligence
Organisational skills	Organisational skills	Desire to succeed	Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	Ability to work autonomously
Problem solving skills	Problem solving skills	Teamwork	Problem solving skills	Teamwork

Teamwork	Teamwork	Capacity to learn	Planning skills	Service orientation
Planning skills	Planning skills	Problem solving skills	Teamwork	Oral communication

### Most important special competencies

When it comes to making recommendations for developing sport management study programmes, it is particularly important to consider the so-called special competencies. These competencies are characterised by a difference of more than 0.5 in their mean averages regarding future importance and current performance and have room for further development in the future. The first three most important special competencies can all be related to digitalisation and data management. The most important special competency is digital marketing in the overall sample. It also presents one of the most important special competencies in all sectors except for public sector sport organisations. This is followed by the special competency use of virtual media / platforms in work in the overall sample. While the use of virtual media / platforms ranks among the most important special competencies in all sectors, it is the most important special competency in professional sports clubs and private sports businesses. The third most important special competency is the use of social media in work in the overall sample. It is one of the most important special competencies in all sectors except for private sports businesses. Sales management ranks fourth for the overall sample. When looking at the sectors, however, it only represents one of the most important special competencies for non-profit sport organisations. The same observation can be made for physical activities for the disabled, which ranks fifth in the overall sample and only represents one of the most important special competencies for non-profit sport organisations. It is a very interesting finding that these special competencies reveal room for improvement for the future sport management curriculum in terms of professional and methods competencies, in particular in relation to digitalisation and data management. This is contrary to the findings for current, future and core competencies. Table 41 shows the most important special competencies according to the respondents of the survey across all sectors and for the four sectors separately.

Table 41: *Most important special competencies according to sectors*

Overall	Non-profit sport organisations	Professional sports clubs	Public sector sport organisations	Private sports businesses
Digital marketing	Digital marketing	Use of virtual media / platforms in work	Ability to utilise big data	Use of virtual media / platforms in work
Use of virtual media / platforms in work	Physical activities for the disabled	Use of social media in work	Use of virtual media / platforms in work	Ability to utilise big data

Use of social media in work	Use of virtual media / platforms in work	Digital marketing	Sponsorship management	Critical and self-critical abilities
Sales management	Sales management	Knowledge of a second language	Sports related legislation	Knowledge of a second language
Physical activities for the disabled	Use of social media in work	Recruitment	Use of social media in work	Digital marketing

### *Conclusions*

The 54 experts who responded to the quantitative survey filled leading positions in the field of sport management in Germany and included top tier managers (50 %) and other specialists with responsibilities for human resource management in their organisations. They represented typical sectors of the sport labour market (non-profit sport organisations, professional sports clubs, public sector sport organisations, private sports businesses). The majority of the respondents worked within non-profit sport organisations. Some 81 % of the respondents were male and 19 % were female.

While commercialisation of the sport market in Germany cannot be characterised as a tendency any more, it might most certainly be the case for digitalisation. The latter can be regarded as a major finding of the present study. This is documented by the nearly uniform perception of the respondents, who stated that the development of the IT sector affects their future working environments considerably. Half of the respondents believed that within the next ten years new professions and occupations will be created within the information technology sector (especially social media and online marketing). A bit more than half of the respondents stated that their organisations currently cooperate with a higher education institution. When it comes to recruitment processes, the respondents named personal contacts and word-of-mouth as important means of finding new employees.

Furthermore, the study demonstrates that the so-called “soft skills” gain in importance for sport managers. Out of the 72 different competencies examined within the survey, networking, teamwork, oral communication, and decision-making and leadership skills were considered very important future competencies for professionals in the area of sport management.

It is interesting to note that the respondents believed that on average the competencies, which they currently possess, will be even more important in the future. Competencies in the area of IT (in particular digital marketing, virtual media and social media) will increasingly be needed in the future. There were only seven out of the 72 competencies examined that were perceived to be slightly less important in the future.

As has been emphasised in this report, the sport labour market is very diverse. Therefore, a sector analysis was conducted, including non-profit sport organisations, professional sport



clubs, public sector sport organisations and private sports businesses to be able to show similarities and differences between the sectors.

## **4.2 Results from qualitative data analysis**

This chapter will present the results of the qualitative data analysis, in particular, concerning three fields of enquiry for the sport labour market in Germany: (1) trends, (2) competencies, (3) job development, qualifications and recruitment. First, the main findings considering the specific nature of non-profit sport organisations, professional sports clubs, public sector sport organisations and private sports businesses will be illustrated. A short conclusion and implication summarises each topic.

### 4.2.1 Trends in sport management in Germany

The first section of the interview guide focused on two questions regarding different trends that affect the work of sport managers at present and in the future. Based on the results of the previous quantitative survey, some 96-98 % of the survey respondents perceived digitalisation and commercialisation of sport to affect their working areas at present and in the future. Some 66 % of the survey respondents also believed that internationalisation of sport affects their working area. It was then the aim of the qualitative study to gain deeper insights concerning structural, process-related, and situational aspects of the trends identified. In addition, interviewees should be given the opportunity to talk about trends, other than digitalisation, commercialisation and internationalisation.

The content analysis provided a variety of aspects regarding the three megatrends. It can be concluded that the interviewees perceived digitalisation, commercialisation, and internationalisation as social processes that are interlinked more often than not. However, digitalisation has crystallised as a key driver within all of the interviewees' working areas and as a key driver for the two other trends. This finding is especially interesting, since digitalisation means not only a social process, which facilitates the operations and working processes in the current sport labour market, but also a driving force in creating new jobs in sport organisations, as one representative from a professional sport club pointed out:

*"Digitalisation has an impact in so far as we've just decided to hire a Digital Officer. I believe that digitalisation is a field that will affect every field of activity, and at the end of the day digital processes will increasingly find their way into each field of activity." (C2)*

### *Digitalisation*

The content analysis suggested that digitalisation has affected the workings of the sport organisations represented by the interviewees in different ways. Some representatives of sport organisations from the private sector and from professional sports clubs associated digitalisation with internal structures and processes within their organisations. In addition, they also referred to an external perspective, including their customers and consumers, which demonstrates the contribution that digitalisation may make to the ongoing commercialisation

of sport within their sectors. However, there was a strong consensus between the representatives from the two sectors that internal and external digitalisation processes mean a prerequisite for future competitiveness in the sport business, rather than a mere trend that an organisation can follow or not. Nevertheless, there also existed doubts and challenges associated with digitalisation processes in these organisations, as a further representative from a professional sports clubs remarked:

*“On the other hand, as said before, when dealing more and more with the topic Facebook: In an emotional moment, I once was about to say: we leave [it]. Because it also does quite some damage. And we now focus on our website as the only communication medium, we advance and promote it. And there, you yourself can control who sees what and when and you don’t depend on any algorithm and pay money for it!” (C3)*

A more reserved or reluctant stance concerning the trend of digitalisation was expressed by representatives of sport organisations from the public sector and non-profit sport organisations. This reluctance was related to challenges such as finances, data protection and adaptation processes due to the age structures of employees within these sectors. Although being more cautious, these representatives did not doubt or question the necessity of digitalisation within their sectors but rather acknowledged that it would be a question of time within change management and reliant on the key stakeholders. In particular, representatives from non-profit sport organisations reflected on challenges of acceptance within their specific, volunteer-dependent structures. Table 42 shows exemplary interview accounts concerning digitalisation processes within sport organisations from the four sectors. These interview accounts reflect very well on how the specific nature of different types of sport organisations in the four sectors have influenced the perceptions that the interviewees expressed on digitalisation.

Table 42: *Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning aspects of digitalisation (own illustration)*

Non-profit sport organisations	Professional sports clubs
<p><i>“This means that on one hand, digitalisation is of course important for us, but we still need to rely on analogue processes, because the landscape of these clubs [...] is still a bit old-school. And because of course a state sports confederation needs to take care of which type of information it transmits by electronic means. For that reason we can say that for us it makes many things easier in the communication with the member organisations, but we cannot say that it will be a cure-all for the future. [...] In other words, this trend of expediting digitalisation is great, the costs entailed and also the training as well as the question</i></p>	<p><i>“So, as such, digitalisation is a real opportunity to promote economisation or commercialisation. But both are only support structures for the actual topic, for sports, but you cannot do without them.” (C3)</i></p>



<i>of how to implement it on the other hand are not so ideal.” (NP1)</i>	
<b>Public sector sport organisations</b>  <i>“Digitalisation, yes. But digitalisation only to the extent that information systems, for example availability of halls, coaches, infrastructure, that these of course can increasingly be provided as web-based services, and that in a few years certainly the municipalities, the actual central bodies responsible for infrastructures so to say, will need to be the ones to provide them. [...] In other words, it is just that more or less digital technologies, digitalisation, are more and more applied. But the situation in the public sector of the sports industry is certainly not so different from other economic sectors.” (PU2)</i>	<b>Private sports businesses</b>  <i>“The topic of digitalisation is maybe younger than the other two [commercialisation, internationalisation], which have been clear for us for a long time. Yes, we are a company that is very young and extremely focused on the topic digitalisation, not only in terms of business, but all sorts of processes. From creation process to supply chain process – the topic digitalisation is omnipresent and will continue to define the significant changes.” (P1)</i>

## Commercialisation

The content analysis further suggested that commercialisation was a trend that seemed to be strong for professional sports clubs and to some degree for non-profit and public sector sport organisations, although it was less emphasised for the latter. For the private sector, this trend did not exist, since it is by definition in the nature of these organisations to develop, produce and market commercial products or services. However, the interviewees did not regard commercialisation as a new trend in general (in particular in professional sports clubs), but rather as a phenomenon that had already started and would still becoming more significant in the future. The German professional football league, for example, has attempted at generating additional revenues from media companies, by increasing the number of kick-off times during a match day, which has also brought about Monday games in the highest division. This development, however, has also resulted in strong criticism from football fan organisations (Adam, Bauers & Hovemann, 2019). Similar to private sports businesses, representatives of professional sports clubs therefore regarded making profits as everyday business, which could be further reinforced by the digital transformation and the entry in new markets abroad (internationalisation).

Representatives of non-profit sport organisations expressed an increasing need to engage in and increase commercial activities accompanied by a higher service orientation and quality, mainly because of external pressures arising from competitive offers on the private leisure market (e.g. fitness clubs and health service providers) (Bayle & Robinson, 2007). In addition, non-profit sport organisations have increasingly engaged in partnerships with private sector organisations that most often take the form of sponsorships or in kind support, in order to generate new income streams in addition to traditional types of financial support, such as grants and membership fees. One representative of a non-profit sport organisation explained:



*“Commercialisation, yes, of course it is progressing and as a matter of fact in our case it maybe is a good example to the effect that we [...] finance ourselves very much with partners and sponsors, where we eventually try to implement sport content-related ideas that in our opinion express our values together with our partners, and at the end of the day via CSR activities, advertising services, figures whether we can quantify the costs like overhead costs and management costs (sic). In this respect, I believe that there is a trend of commercialisation to be observed in all areas of sports at the moment. This applies not only to professional sports clubs, but particularly to clubs, federations that eventually become aware or in the best case are aware of a role of sports, but now and then this doesn’t work properly.” (NP2)*

Altogether, it can be concluded that commercialisation is an ongoing trend that affects sport organisations from all sectors. However, commercialisation affects professional sports clubs to a higher and non-profit and public sector sport organisations to a lesser degree. Moreover, the interview materials suggested that not all representatives have associated positively with the increase of commercialisation. Table 43 shows exemplary interview accounts concerning aspects of commercialisation within the four sectors.

Table 43: *Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning aspects of commercialisation (own illustration)*

<p><b>Non-profit sport organisations</b></p> <p><i>“Well, talking about commercialisation of sports, there are various facets, as well. The search for more external resources, of course, is also a part of commercialisation, there is no doubt. And commercialisation, as the name implies, of course plays a role, having commercial providers on the market that play a role, so that of course we need to deal with the aspect of commercialisation. As said before, a competitive situation is one thing, but the question of how to optimally market what I have, how to optimally “sell” it, and of course then of course it plays, that we (sic) what I would associate with commercialisation in this context.” (NP3)</i></p>	<p><b>Professional sports clubs</b></p> <p><i>“And that is why this all is even linked to some extent, and from the company’s point of view the topic of commercialisation, how can I commercialise this, is paramount. And that is why I think it is absolutely correct to put these three issues, these key points side by side, because for me, they absolutely belong together.” (C1)</i></p> <p><i>“Commercialisation, of course, unfortunately. It is more and more noticeable. This is Handball-Bundesliga, first-division handball, this is business, and whoever has the most money, gets the best players and wins. In the majority of cases, at least, which is why it is the central issue for us, because it is the motor and we can solve it with sponsoring, for the most part, which is why we are very, very active there, and this is where digitalisation comes in once again. Because in sponsoring nowadays, there is good demand for the classic areas, but there is an increasing trend towards digital activation.” (C3)</i></p>
<p><b>Public sector sport organisations</b></p> <p><i>“[...] I absolutely have the impression that the topic of commercialisation in this respect was of great importance once before. The processes of commercialisation in sports at the end of the 90s, at the beginning of the, this millennium, keyword: all</i></p>	<p><b>Private sports businesses</b></p> <p><i>“Commercialisation, we are a commercial business, our thinking is commerce-oriented, it has to be, because we are a joint-stock company. In line with this, we need to do justice to our stakeholders and to the employees and shareholders. So I would say that</i></p>





*these private-public partnership concepts. That this was a major topic, where municipalities to some extent tried to develop their sports infrastructure facilities with private investors. But the hype, so to say, there definitely has decreased significantly.” (PU2)*

*commercialisation is not more or less a focus than it has always been. When we became a joint-stock company and are (sic) subject to the rules.” (P1)*

*“Well, I mean, commercialisation is, I work in a business enterprise. We, all the products that we create need to be commercial. So you need to adjust to the market and offer a commercial product, because as soon as we offer a product that is uncommercial, we don’t sell it and when we don’t sell it, we produce bad figures and bad figures are bad for the business. So that is why commercialisation [...] is definitely a must.” (P3)*

## *Internationalisation*

By and large, the content analysis found relatively small differences on the perceptions of the interviewed representatives of sport organisations from the four sectors concerning aspects of digitalisation and commercialisation. However, the interviewees ascribed different meanings to the third mega-trend internationalisation, depending on the sectors which their organisations represented. Interviewees from private sports businesses and from professional sports clubs clearly associated internationalisation with commercialisation and growth opportunities. This observation was not surprising, since most of the organisations from these sectors were either globally operating corporations or professional sports clubs, which had already entered markets abroad. For these representatives, internationalisation meant reaching new target groups, but more generally, the necessity of staying competitive in the market. Not only was internationalisation exemplified in aspects of commercialisation, but also in the fact that English has increasingly become the lingua franca in the private sports businesses in the sample.

On the other hand, the representatives of sport organisations from the non-profit and public sector emphasised the prevailing domestic reach of their activities and largely dismissed internationalisation as a relevant trend for them. One representative of a non-profit sport club from basketball, however, associated the participation of its senior and youth teams in international sporting competitions with further improving and professionalising club structures and processes:

*“This also applies to internationality, of course. We participate in European tournaments, we play all around the world with both our professional team and our youth programme, we have [international] partnerships [...], and internationality is a big, big keyword accordingly.” (NP2)*

While internationalisation appeared to have a certain relevance for this basketball club, it did not seem to be the case for a professional sport club from handball, as the interviewed individual highlighted:

*“Well, internationalisation has no effect on us, because handball has been and will be a local thing. There are no international brands and there probably won’t be any, we can ignore it.” (C3)*

To understand this variation, contextual factors need to be considered. For example, basketball is a more global sport than handball. Moreover, basketball is regarded as one of the strongest growing sports in Germany (The Future of Sports, 2016), while handball as a very popular sport in Germany has reached limitations to growth due to its limited popularity on a global scale.

Altogether, internationalisation seemed to be the most controversial trend as perceived by the interviewees from all sectors except private sports businesses. Therefore, the specificities of the individual organisational backgrounds and goals need to be appreciated, perhaps even more cautiously as compared with the other two mega-trends when drawing conclusions. Table 44 shows exemplary interview accounts concerning aspects of internationalisation within the four sectors.

Table 44: *Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning aspects of internationalisation (own illustration)*

<b>Non-profit sport organisations</b>  <i>“For us, internationalisation is not an issue at all right now, I would say.” (NP1)</i>  <i>“I would say that the topic of internationalisation plays a rather subordinate role for the development in organised sports, it doesn’t have an elementary influence on it. An indirect influence, if any [...]” (NP3)</i>	<b>Professional sports clubs</b>  <i>“I also believe that it is going to occupy us intensively in the next years. It is something that we are just realising and we’ve just hired someone for international marketing. Because when the league is competing with five or four other [football] leagues in Europe, and one day the Japanese, the Chinese and the American league will be global competitors, then it is going to be a matter of how to tap into markets, how to achieve on-site presence, how to secure sponsors, how to sell the knowledge that you have in precisely those markets, a transfer of know-how. So this is an imminent topic, always in cooperation with the league, because the league has to strive to get new sources of revenue out of the international marketing.” (C2)</i>
<b>Public sector sport organisations</b>  <i>“Internationalisation for the public sector, I would be a bit more restrained here. Because the public sector, so to say, when it isn’t addressing the promotion of elite sports, but the whole infrastructure offerings of the public sector are primarily focused on the region, on a city (sic).” (PU2)</i>	<b>Private sports businesses</b>  <i>“Internationalisation is a fundamental part of our reality and nothing else, I would say. [...] Simply speaking: Currently, less than 5 % of our total sales are made in Germany. And as a global company, we are present and relevant everywhere, and the most important markets are China and America, or countries, individual countries.” (P1)</i>

### *Other trends*

In addition to digitalisation, commercialisation and internationalisation, the representatives of the sport organisations from the four sectors were asked about other trends, which they perceived to affect the working environment of sport managers in their organisations at present and in the future. No other additional major trend that appeared to have the same significance to the interviewees compared to the three aforementioned mega-trends emerged from the content analysis<sup>11</sup>. In addition, there appeared no sector-specific particularities concerning other tendencies that the interviewees mentioned. In fact, most of these tendencies were related to digitalisation, such as open source methods and the rise of online businesses, and commercialisation, such as specialisation, professionalisation and eventisation. Although they cannot be regarded as emerging major trends yet, the interviewees referred to concepts, such as sustainability (in particular Corporate Social Responsibility) and value development. It can be concluded from these accounts that there existed at least an increasing awareness of these concepts that might develop into trends and affect the work environments more strongly in the course of social change at some point in the future. The interviewees referred to similar concepts, such as good governance and business ethics, which might be the result of an increased scrutiny of the citizens concerning debatable management and leadership practices in various sport organisations, such as national and international sport federations, professional sports clubs and in the context of international sporting events, as one representative from a sport organisation from the public sector mentioned. Furthermore, the interviewees projected health management to also have an increasing impact on the work of sport managers in the future.

### *Conclusions*

It was the objective of this first field of enquiry to gain deeper insights from the interviewees about how digitalisation, commercialisation, and internationalisation affect the work environments of sport managers in their organisations at present and in the future, and to find out whether other trends exist, which have a strong impact on the sport labour market. Across all sectors, it can be concluded that the participants perceive digitalisation, commercialisation and internationalisation as social trends and processes that are interlinked more often than not. However, these processes appear to affect sport organisations from the four sectors in different ways, which can be explained with structural, process-related and situational differences between these organisations.

Representatives from private sports businesses and professional sports clubs perceive digitalisation as more than a mere trend that an organisation can follow or not. For them, it

---

<sup>11</sup> The lack of further elaboration on other trends is surprising and needs to be reflected critically. It could be, that the interview guide focused too strongly on the three main trends and unwillingly steered the representatives into this direction. A more open approach and further research in this area is advised.

means a prerequisite for future competitiveness in their markets. Digitalisation presents more chances and opportunities than risks and affects nearly all internal and external processes, such as product development and logistics on the one hand, and marketing and sales on the other hand. Moreover, these representatives regard digitalisation as a key driver that may stimulate the expansion of commercial activities both in the domestic and international markets. In this context, the target groups of these organisations need to be considered, which to an increasing extent include so-called digital natives or digital grown-ups, who gain information and consume products and services online by using, for example, smartphones or tablets. Representatives from the non-profit and public sector sport organisations express a more reserved or reluctant stance towards digitalisation and its effects on the working environments in their sport organisations. There is consensus between them that there is a necessity of digitalisation in their organisations, since, for example, the administration of sports services and infrastructure is becoming increasingly more complex. However, they also refer to doubts and challenges that seem to prevent them from initiating digitalisation processes more actively in their organisations, both inside and outside of their organisations. Again, this stance can be explained by considering structural, processual and situational differences. Despite an increasing professionalisation of non-profit sports clubs and federations, there is still a heavy reliance on volunteer work. Moreover, these sport organisations provide services to individuals from all age groups, and those that cannot be considered digital natives still expect to receive information or consumer services in traditional ways. Financial budget constraints might also be considerable barriers to implementing digital platforms and processes more actively in these organisations.

It is emphasised that according to the nature of market-oriented organisations from the private sector, commercialisation does not mean a trend that affects these organisations. Driven by the rationale of profit-maximisation, these organisations develop, produce and market commercial products and services by definition. Although it is not a new trend anymore, representatives of professional sports clubs refer to a continuing commercialisation of their operations at present and in the future, which is increasingly fostered by the digital transformation, for example with the introduction of eSport teams, and internationalisation, for example in the context of partnering with sponsors and professional sports clubs from abroad. According to some interviewees, commercialisation appears to be affecting sport organisations from non-profit and public sector sport organisations as well, although its magnitude is less emphasised. While non-profit sports clubs see the need of generating new income from commercial activities and improving their service quality due to external pressures from private fitness and health service providers, a trend of commercialisation of the public sector can hardly be observed. However, there is an emergence of private sector organisations, such as in education and health care, which increasingly offer services that traditionally public sector sport organisations have provided.

While all interviewees perceive digitalisation and commercialisation to be mega-trends in the sport labour market, it is not necessarily the case for internationalisation. Representatives from private sports businesses refer to international markets as being even more important than the domestic market, which is also reflected in the fact that English is lingua franca in these organisations. Representatives of professional sports clubs regard internationalisation as important, while there is a need to consider contextual factors, such as the nature of the professional club. While a professional football club from the Bundesliga (first league) regards internationalisation as a necessity and therefore engages in international activities, it is not the case for a professional handball club from the first league according to the limited popularity of the sport on a global scale. Representatives of non-profit sport organisations find limited relevance of internationalisation for their working environment. In sport organisations of the public sector, this trend can be considered to be close to non-existent.

While the interviewees presented interesting details for the three mega-trends digitalisation, commercialisation and internationalisation, they were more reluctant to speak about other trends to affect their working environments. Therefore, it is difficult or even impossible to draw any conclusions whether there are similarities or differences between sport organisations from the four sectors in terms of other important trends. However, there appears to be an awareness that sport organisations will need to pay more attention in the future concerning the sustainability and social responsibility in their activities as well as concerning good governance and ethical business practices. Whether these phenomena will transform into (mega-) trends in the sport labour market needs to be investigated in future studies. In this context, this study had a limitation in its methodological approach. Since, according to the results of the quantitative survey, digitalisation, commercialisation and internationalisation were identified as mega-trends, the study specifically asked for more details concerning these trends in the qualitative study. Therefore, the interviewees might have been too focused on or biased by these specific questions, resulting in less information gained on further trends than expected.

After the presentation and discussion of the findings concerning the first field of enquiry, the report focuses next on the second field of enquiry – competencies of future sport managers required by the labour market.

#### 4.2.2 Competencies

It was the second study objective to examine those competencies that sport managers need to possess in the future. Moreover, the study aimed at identifying those competencies that the representatives of the sport organisations from the four sectors considered particularly important. In order to account for structural, process-related and situational factors of the respective sport organisation, the interviewees were asked to describe contexts, in which these important competencies are needed. It was of special interest to differentiate

competencies, which would be considered specific knowledge in sport management and other competencies, such as those competencies, which are largely referred to as “soft skills”.

According to Weinert (2001), competencies mean cognitive abilities and skills that individuals possess or have acquired in order to solve certain problems, as well as motivational, volitional and social dispositions that are needed to use the problem solving successfully and responsibly in variable situations. The competence explorer by Heyse & Erpenbeck (2004, p. XXII) served for the purpose of this study, in order to allocate the competencies that the interviewees have mentioned and discussed to four competence classes. The four competence classes included:

1. P = Personal competencies (e.g. self-management, reliability, willingness to learn);
2. A = Activity and action competencies (e.g. flexibility, ability to handle stress, goal-oriented management);
3. M = Methods and professional competencies (e.g. analytical talent/ability, project management, specialised knowledge);
4. S = Socio-communicative competencies (e.g. team skills, language proficiency, ability to solve problems).

The results of the previous quantitative study showed that socio-communicative competencies were most vital for future sport managers. The survey measured the importance of various competencies on a scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = not at all important; 5 = very important).

Table 45 shows the five most important competencies for future sport managers according to the quantitative survey.

*Table 45: Most important future competencies in general (own illustration)*

<b>n = 51</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
1. Teamwork (S)	4.63	0.627
2. Networking (S)	4.63	0.662
3. Oral communication (S)	4.58	0.605
4. Decision making skills (A)	4.58	0.572
5. Capacity for applying knowledge in practice (A)	4.54	0.541

Although the top five competencies appeared to be important across all sectors, there were differences in importance in different types of sport organisations from the four sectors, which can be associated with sector-specific characteristics. Table 46 shows the most important future competencies for sport managers in sport organisations in different sectors, according to the results of the previous quantitative survey.

Table 46: *Most important future competencies according to sectors (own illustration)*

Overall	Non-profit sport organisations	Professional sports clubs	Public sector sport organisations	Private sports businesses
Teamwork	Networking	Networking	Problem solving skills	Teamwork
Networking	Marketing	Decision making skills	Teamwork	Ethical commitment
Oral communication	Digital marketing	Teamwork	Leadership skills	Social intelligence
Decision making skills	Strategic planning and development	Ability to work autonomously	Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	Service orientation
Capacity for applying knowledge in practice	Decision making skills	Oral communication	Organisational skills	Capacity for applying knowledge in practice

Since teamwork, networking and oral communication are competencies, which the respondents to the quantitative survey considered most important for future sport managers in sport organisations across all sectors, the interviewees were asked to elaborate on whether and why these competencies are relevant. Moreover, the interviewees were asked to describe contexts, in which these competencies are important<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore, the study attempted to understand to what extent competencies related to digitalisation, such as digital marketing, the use of virtual media/platforms and the use of social media, are regarded as important competencies for the representatives of the sport organisations from the four sectors and in which contexts these competencies are important in their working environments.

The content analysis applied deductive and inductive coding in a first step. There emerged 268 coded segments in terms of different competence characteristics. The code cloud in Figure 13 presents the frequency of competence characteristics that were described. The interviewees mentioned teamwork, networking, decision-making and oral communication most often, when they spoke about competencies. However, caution is advised when drawing conclusions from the code cloud, since the interviewees were asked explicitly about these competencies, while other competencies emerged from the interview situation.

---

<sup>12</sup> If the interviewees spoke about one of the three competencies without specifically being asked in the related question, the competence “decision-making skills” was used for the interviewees to further elaborate on the most important competencies for future sport managers in their organisations.





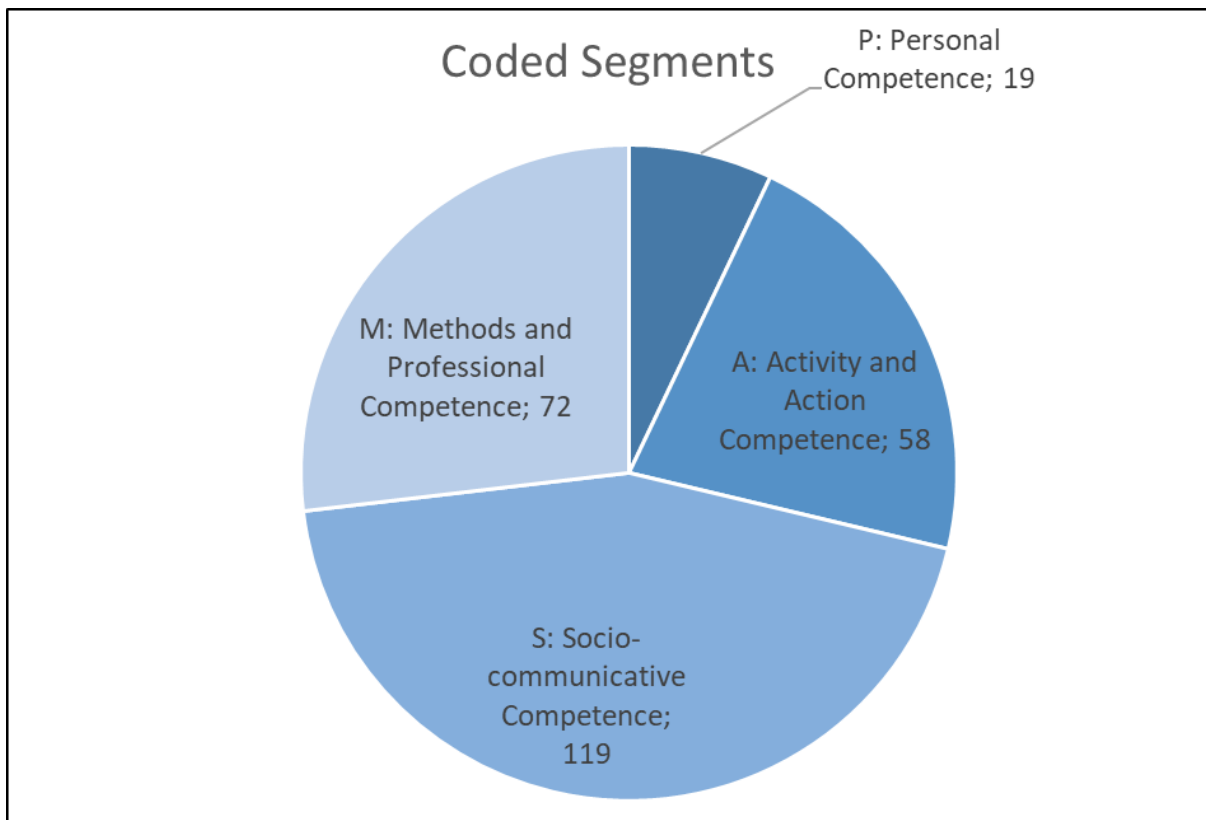
Erasmus+



Figure 13: Code cloud showing the competence characteristics mentioned most often in the interviews (own illustration)

In a second step, the competence characteristics were allocated to one of the four classes of the competence explorer (Heyse & Erpenbeck, 2004, p. XXII). Figure 14 shows the overall distribution of these characteristics within the four classes of the competence explorer.





*Figure 14: Coded segments classified according to the competence explorer (own illustration, according to Heyse & Erpenbeck, 2004, p. XXII)*

The results in the code cloud in Figure 13 confirm the findings of the previous quantitative survey concerning the three most important future competencies. However, other competencies emerged from the interviews, which the representatives of the sport organisations from the four sectors perceived to be important for future sport managers in their relevant organisation. For a better understanding of the competence characteristics in the four classes, as well as similarities and differences between the sport organisations from the four sectors, the findings for each competence class will be presented and discussed individually.

### *Personal competencies*

The interviewees perceived personal competencies to be of little importance, as compared with the other competence classes to follow. From the coded segments, only three characteristics emerged which were determined to be personal competencies. From the descriptions of the interviewees, the affinity to sport emerged as an outstanding personal competency. All interviewees had positive associations with the affinity to sport and for most interviewees it meant a competency that future sport managers should necessarily possess, as one representative from a sporting goods manufacturer (private sector) pointed out:

*"They need to have a soft spot for sports. I consider that as very important in our case, because everyone here [...] is in some way connected to sports. Due to this, they, especially sports economists, are people who study economics, but all of them have a huge soft spot for sports." (P2)*

Although this specific interview account explicitly refers to sport managers or sport economists, most of the other interviewees did not associate the affinity to sport with the occupational area of sport management or sport economics. Moreover, this affinity is expressed in the involvement of future employees in sport in one way or another, such as outside of their job (e.g. coach and recreational athlete), which the interviewees regarded as important to understand the necessities and peculiarities of the sport sector. The interviewees often linked the affinity to sport to other competencies that they perceived to be critical (e.g. teamwork, communication skills, leadership, humour and passion). There are repeated references in the interview materials to the link between affinity to sport and other competencies, which suggests that there is a strong coherence across all types of sport organisations from the four sectors being subject to this study. This strong finding presents interesting implications for recruitment processes in sport organisations, as affinity to sport seems to weigh stronger than other qualifications.

Furthermore, the interviewees referred to leadership and responsibility as two vital personal competencies. Again, it became apparent that both competencies were not mentioned in isolation, but rather in the context of either socio-communicative competencies, such as leadership linked to teamwork, or in the context of activity and action competencies, such as responsibility linked to the ability to make decisions. The exemplary interview accounts in Table 47 present similarities and differences concerning the importance of personal competencies across all four sectors.

Table 47: *Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning personal competencies (own illustration)*

<b>Non-profit sport organisations</b>  <i>"A special situation is, how do I deal with the 10, 15 instructors who are on duty in the club, how do I lead them. So for me, management behaviour and leadership skills are definitely something that belongs into the field of soft skills." (NP3)</i>  <i>"And very important in the whole field of human resources and especially human resources development, personnel management, if I transfer this to us: we are working with 120 coaches here. And of course, coaches somehow are a particular breed of individuals." (NP2)</i>	<b>Professional sports clubs</b>  <i>"Absolutely! Yes. Because this alone shows the passion and emotion, that someone, if someone studied sports, that they naturally have a high affinity for the field of sports, and we are a football club." (C1)</i>  <i>"But this [leadership] is a skill that should definitely be taught. Because it is about managers. So actually you could apply the executive coaching here, as well." (C3)</i>
<b>Public sector sport organisations</b>	<b>Private sports businesses</b>



*"And I think this is essential, that they are able to decide independently, by themselves. Often, there is no help available. If you are, and you know that as well, if you are somewhere out there, then you are on your own. Then you are standing next to the dealer and you need to say, oh, how do I do that now? On a Sunday, sometimes it is on a weekend, you can't just call anyone, and it's on you then. Then you are responsible, in this moment. This is not so easy." (P2)*

To conclude, an affinity to sport is an essential competency that future sport managers need to possess. However, it weighs very strong that future employees possess this affinity, in the sense of an innate or intrinsic motivation, regardless of a degree in sport management or sport economics (which may certainly imply such an affinity). Leadership skills are often regarded as unique skills in sport, and the literature refers to strong leaders on the pitch (e.g. team captain) and at the side-line of the pitch (e.g. coach) (Molan, Matthews & Arnold, 2016). Therefore, it is not surprising that leadership skills are also regarded critical in management in different types of sport organisations. As opposed to other types of sport organisations, non-profit sport clubs and federations are characterised by two types of employees, paid staff and volunteers. Therefore, special leadership skills are needed with future sport managers in these organisations. Furthermore, it needs to be considered that volunteers in general but also (volunteer) coaches in particular sometimes have their own special characteristics and behaviours, which require adequate leadership. Leadership is regarded as critical in professional sports clubs as well. Taking over responsibility was highlighted by one representative from the private sector. However, it becomes very clear from the interview materials that personal competencies, such as affinity to sport, leadership, and responsibility are often linked to other competencies, such as socio-communicative competencies.

### *Socio-communicative competencies*

The interview materials suggest that the representatives of the sport organisations from the four sectors ascribed the highest importance to socio-communicative competencies. However, it is important to note that almost all representatives referred to "soft skills" at some point in the interview, in particular when asked in the open-ended questions regarding important competencies. It can be suggested that, based on their diverging subjective understandings, the interviewees used the term "soft skills" almost as a panacea to refer to competencies that they found difficult to describe, but were different to professional competencies, such as knowledge. More often than not, the interviewees emphasised these "soft skills" or social competencies, by referring to them before turning their attention to the more sport management specific competencies (methods and professional competency) in the open-ended questions regarding important competencies. This finding seems not to be too surprising, as the three most important specific competencies according to the previous quantitative survey are all located in the class of socio-communicative competencies. The results show, however, that socio-communicative competencies need to be considered as a

complex phenomenon, as it is illustrated in exemplary interview accounts from the sample in Table 48.

Table 48: *Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning socio-communicative competencies (own illustration)*

<b>Non-profit sport organisations</b>  <i>"But what is much more important are the social skills, of course, you still need to demonstrate those here, as well. Most of the employees here [...] do have contact with the outside world, so it is important for them to be able to cater to their counterpart and, most importantly, to put themselves in their place."</i> (NP1)	<b>Professional sports clubs</b>  <i>"have high social skills, because what is important for us, by working in an area, be it communication or sales, you deal with other areas a lot, and that is why the topic is social skills, how can I eventually function in a group, how can I function in collaboration with others."</i> (C2)
<b>Public sector sport organisations</b>  <i>"So it requires, let's say, the whole bundle of skills in dealing with people, of course. Capacity for empathy, being able to listen, patience, also the question of how to optimally support students in our case, and maybe also colleagues, in their plans."</i> (PU3)	<b>Private sports businesses</b>  <i>"But then also, yes, also social skills, it is the organisation, well, in our case, we also have a lot of contact to customers outside. Be it to our [...] customers, be it to the dealers out there, and in my opinion, these soft skills sometimes get lost a bit."</i> (P2)

Within the context of socio-communicative competencies, the interviewees repeatedly mentioned what in German is known as *"Fingerspitzengefühl"* which combines tact, intuition and sensitivity to different situations and personalities. This term is also closely related to empathy, which was referred to by one representative of a non-profit sports confederation and one representative from a higher education institution. There are two further socio-communicative competencies, which the interviewees perceived to be particularly important: problem solving skills and service/customer orientation. As service/customer orientation was also among the top five important competencies of future sport managers in the private sector in the quantitative analysis, it is no surprise that all three representatives of sport organisations from the private sector highlighted this competency in the interviews. According to the representatives of the professional sports clubs and non-profit sector sport organisations, service/customer orientation is an important competency in these sport organisations, as well.

Although there is an orientation towards the customer in the sport organisations from all four sectors, the meanings of customer between the interviewees need to be differentiated. The representatives of non-profit sport organisations, professional sports clubs and private sports businesses focused on end consumers, sales representatives, sponsors and on member clubs. The representatives of public sector sport organisations, on the other hand, did not accentuate the customer/service orientation within their individual fields of work.

It is no surprise that the representatives of the sport organisations from the four sectors presented more detailed descriptions about the competencies, which they were asked to elaborate on in the interviews more specifically (in the same importance order)<sup>13</sup>. The representatives perceived teamwork to be most important, according to the number of coded segments (33). Moreover, teamwork appeared to be most critical to the representatives from private sector sport organisations, who highlighted this competency more often than any other competency. More emphasised, they unanimously described teamwork as a prerequisite for successful work in their respective organisations. The representatives of the professional sports clubs also highlighted teamwork in combination with the development of cross-functional and interdisciplinary tasks/teams. The representatives of sport organisations from the non-profit and public sectors were more reluctant with highlighting teamwork as a competence of highest importance. The answers showed that teamwork is desirable, but not an absolute necessity. One of the representatives explained the ambivalence to teamwork within the non-profit sector, as follows:

*“Teamwork, I am convinced here, as well, is a great skill. On the other hand, I can tell you, that many of our organisations, you need to picture them as rather compartmentalised organisations. I will never forget the manager of a regional association who said the only one to talk to is the mirror, because I am the only one in the office. So, in many places we also have very, very small organisations who have one full-time employee, and the question is, what is teamwork there? Then, teamwork of course is the cooperation between full-time and honorary staff, and then teamwork is one of the key skills. I only want to aim at interpreting the question of teamwork again.” (NP3)*

It appears that the interviewees regarded teamwork as a competency, which they perceived to be more relevant for the internal workings of the organisations. However, concerning the competency cross-functional and interdisciplinary tasks/teams, it can be suggested that there is also an external perspective on teamwork, which some representatives of the sport organisations from the four sectors might rather have associated with networking, as the same representative from a non-profit sport organisation stated:

*“All right, then let’s start with networking, I am absolutely sure here, networking is a very high skill that is required in organised sports. Organised sports is based on a big network, as well, obviously not only organised sports, but the networking of organised sports within the respective environment, in the political environment, the social environment, so networking is most definitely a key skill that is required to get by well as sports manager in organised sports.” (NP3)*

It is striking to notice that only two interviewees mentioned the importance of networking before being asked about this competency specifically. After being asked, however, almost all interviewees perceived networking to be an important facet across all sectors. However, the interviewees ascribed different meanings to networking, which can be associated with different subjective understandings and contextual factors. Several representatives

---

<sup>13</sup> Annex 2 in the attachments shows the distribution of the three most important overall competencies as mentioned by the interviewees in the open ended questions.



distinguished between internal and external networking as two different aspects, giving internal networking more weight than possessing an external network from the very beginning. One representative from a sporting goods manufacturer illustrated this difference, as follows:

*“There is a relatively large number of jobs with almost no external touchpoint (I: yes). And of course, there are things, of course most of the things we do are external, and here, but that depends on the job, external or internal (sic). (I: Okay) But no matter where, you will always have a relatively high number of people who you should be in touch with regularly in a meaningful way, so that you are able to rely on that, if necessary, and to discuss things in a trustworthy manner.” (P1)*

One representative of a sport organisation from the private sector highlighted informal communication methods (“modern networking”) as an essential competency in the sector. Another representative argued that the competency of relationship management is something that is innate to the individuals.

Similar to networking, there were only five interviewees, who mentioned oral communication as an important competency in the open question. When asked specifically, the representatives of the private sector sport organisations and professional sports clubs regarded oral communication as a competency that plays a vital role in the daily work of sport managers, interlinked with the expectation of proficiency in a foreign language (minimum English) and aspects of internationalisation. Moreover, they often perceived strong oral communication skills as a prerequisite for successful work. For the representatives of sport organisations from the non-profit sector oral communication skills were equally essential. Since internationalisation affects non-profit organisations only to a lesser extent, it is not surprising that the representatives from the sector did not regard English language proficiency as an importance competency. Furthermore, oral communication as a competency does not stand alone. Rather, the representatives mentioned oral communication skills in the context of networking and persuasiveness. Oral communication did not appear to be an important competency for the representatives of public sector sport organisations.

### *Activity and action competencies*

Some five activity and action competencies emerged from the content analysis: capacity to make decisions, passion, practical application, critical reflection and flexibility/mobility. Overall, all of the above appeared to be relevant for future sport managers in the organisations in the four sectors. However, one particular competence stood out: capacity to make decisions. The interviewees ascribed much more meaning to this competency than just “making a (top-down) decision”. Moreover, they emphasised that there is a necessity for future sport managers to back up and stand by their decisions, i.e. to demonstrate responsibility and ownership for these decisions in the end. It became evident, however, that not all future sport managers would be in the situation of making (difficult) decisions. According to one representative from a non-profit sport organisation, guidance and preparation of (future) decisions were also associated with this specific competency. For the





representatives of sport organisations from the private sector, on the other hand, decision-making is a vital competency that is necessary on a daily basis for future sport managers. One representative from a sporting goods manufacturer illustrated:

*“One example from my old role in sports marketing, I made an offer to a player manager who has a player in the first league in a big country, and the agent came back and said, I have another offer from Puma, they offer 100.000 euros more per year (I: Yes) for wearing their shoes and you have until the day after tomorrow to decide whether you match the offer, then we’ll work with you, otherwise we’ll go to Puma. Then he needs to decide how to deal with that and I would say, this is an everyday situation for a player manager, he does not have to be in a permanent department, he then needs to take a decision about figures in the range of 100.000 or several millions, how to deal with that (I: Yes). Which alternatives do I have, do I have players who offer the same, how is the market situation, do I believe him or did he bluff?” (P1)*

Clearly decision-making is not a competence that stands alone. In many situations in the working life of sport managers, decisions are often made in a team rather than by one single person, which highlights the equal need for socio-communicative competencies, such as teamwork and empathy. The capacity to make decisions is also linked with prioritising tasks and activities, which in turn is a prerequisite for effective and efficient working processes. In these decision-making situations, it appears to be vital that future sport managers will have a well-balanced set of competencies available. The representatives of private sports businesses and professional sports clubs recognised that not all decisions would necessarily be the right decisions. However, they mentioned this parenthetically, which leads to the conclusion that the ability to make a decision weighs more than always making *the* right decision.

Next to the capacity to make decisions, passion was highlighted as another important competency for future sport managers by interviewees in some sectors. Most of the interviewees mentioned passion at some point. While passion can sometimes be tangent to sport affinity, the analysis of the interviews yielded another form of passion for a specific company, brand or product. The representatives of private sports businesses and professional sports clubs expected future employees to identify themselves with the brand and to be able to show this transparently (or at least demonstrate an understanding of the concept of organisational or brand identification), as one representatives from a sporting goods manufacturer illustrated by referring to a job interview situation:

*“And even if that person only dressed up for that day, it still is (sic), if I know what they are wearing there, if I were to apply for a job with Adidas, then I would buy a pair of Adidas shoes for 30 euros somewhere, in an outlet, if necessary, and I would put on a shirt and jeans. You know?” (P3)*

Organisational identification seems to be part of a “cultural fit” that companies are looking for today (Wien & Franzke, 2016). Next to this interpretation of identification, passion also stands for both modesty and ardour at the same time, as this quote from a representative of a professional sports club showed:

*“As I said, in the beginning I prepared the potato salad myself, you have to do that, too. So, there is this, there is this margin, you can’t think [yourself] too good for small things. Uli Hoeneß also said, I’ll be*

*greenkeeper here, if need be, if Bayern Munich is going through [bad] times. Well, he will never have to do that but at least he needs to be willing to do it and every employee needs to feel that.” (C3)*

The interviewees emphasised the capacity of applying knowledge to practice as an important competency. However, when dealing with this competency in the interviews, some representatives expressed criticisms addressed at higher education institutions. One interviewee pointed out that it is the responsibility of higher education institutions to react to the requirements of the labour market, and complained about their seeming lack of engagement in this context. Another representative, from a slightly different angle, explained that the process of transformation of theoretical knowledge (gained from higher education institutions) into palpable, practical knowledge takes a couple of years and presupposes practical experience (in the sport labour market). Yet another representative differentiated between the theoretical knowledge and the guidance or control of putting this knowledge into practice, by pointing out that future sport managers do not have to know how to apply everything practically, but rather understand the risks and opportunities of specific situations (theoretically) and handle them accordingly (practically).

The literature recognises critical thinking as a “central competence of university graduates in a variety of professional fields, including sport management” (Zakus, Malloy & Edwards, 2007, p. 133). The content analysis found that critical reflection is an important competency for all representatives of sport organisations from the public sector, as one professor from a higher education institution described:

*“I believe that for this reason, sports managers need to be more and more trained to question these things. Not only to understand how things correlate, but to evaluate developments. That they are enabled to, let’s say, not find or acquire knowledge during their training, but to ask themselves whether that knowledge is correct and to examine things critically.” (PU1)*

The other representatives, however, did not focus on critical thinking, nor did they declare ethical thinking an important competency that future sport managers need to possess. This finding is quite surprising as ethical commitment resulted to be the second most important competency for sport organisations from the private sector according to the previous quantitative study. The interviewees also regarded flexibility and mobility of future employees as important activity and action competencies.

#### *Methods and professional competencies*

Within the class of methods and professional competencies, three main pillars emerged from the interview materials: digital competencies, analytical skills and specialised (sport management) knowledge.

In the context of digital competencies, the interviewees, referred to digital marketing and general IT-skills, as being particularly important. However, these findings need to be treated with caution, since the interview guide contained one question that asked the interviewees about the relevance of digital competencies for future sport managers, in particular. In this



context, it is interesting to note that only three representatives mentioned IT-skills as important competencies, before being asked specifically (all within the context of the first question of the interview guide concerning digitalisation as a trend for the future). Therefore, it appears to be conceivable that the representatives would not have focused on digital competencies without the prompt.

When exploring the results in more detail, all interviewees expected an intermediate level of competency in the use of generic IT-skills. Any further competencies in this area, be it digital marketing, social media management or the use of virtual media/platforms are what one interviewee called “nice to have”. Although digitalisation affects sport organisations from all sectors strongly, the interviewees associated the necessity of these competencies more with IT/digitalisation specialists as compared to generalist sport managers.

Analytical skills combine personal competencies with methods and professional competencies (Heyse & Erpenbeck, 2004). Representatives of all sport organisations from the four sectors referred to “thinking analytically” and “acting analytically” at some stage in their interviews. Often, analytical skills refer to (big) data analysis with specific software. In particular, future sport managers need to understand how to structure, analyse and visualise information and results. It is an interesting finding that most interviewees believed that future sport managers would need to graduate from a higher education institution in order to possess these competencies.

There was much variation when the interviewees talked about specialised knowledge. Therefore, it is not possible to delineate clearly between different sectors. Many of the representatives appeared to be reluctant when speaking about specialised sport management knowledge as a prerequisite for future sport managers. While most interviewees recognised the responsibility of higher education institutions to provide students with the necessary specialised knowledge, they often complained about the fact that this specialised knowledge is difficult to then apply to practice. There were only the representatives of sport organisations from the non-profit and public sector who elaborated on certain areas where they perceived that specialised knowledge was useful.

### *Conclusions*

The second field of enquiry aimed to obtain deeper descriptions from the interviewees about the importance of certain competencies, which future sport managers need to possess in order to work successfully in one of the sport organisations from the four sectors, as represented in the sample. Deductive and inductive coding resulted in 268 coded segments of competence characteristics. Teamwork, networking, oral communication and the capacity to make decisions were the competencies mentioned most often by the interviewees. However, this finding needs to be treated with caution, because, based on the findings from the previous quantitative survey, the interviewees were asked specifically to give detailed information concerning these competencies. It can be suggested that without this particular prompt, the



interviewees might have referred to these competencies to a remarkably lesser extent. The competence explorer by Heyse & Erpenbeck (2004, p. XXII) was used to allocate the coded segments of competence characteristics to four competence classes (1) personal competencies, (2) socio-communicative competencies, (3) activity and action competencies and (4) methods and professional competencies.

Personal competencies appeared to be of least relevance to the interviewees. The affinity to sport emerged as a crucial personal competency in the sport organisations across all sectors. It is interesting to note that the interviewees did not necessarily associate the affinity to sport with a sport management degree. In addition, leadership and responsibility were found to be important personal competencies in all sport organisations except for those from the public sector. The interviewees from non-profit sport organisations emphasised the importance of special leadership skills, since future sport managers need to lead two types of employees within these organisations: paid staff on the one hand and volunteers on the other. Representatives from professional sports clubs emphasised leadership skills as well, and some regarded it as an important ingredient in a sport management curriculum at a higher education institution. However, it becomes very clear from the interview materials that personal competencies, such as affinity to sport, leadership, and responsibility are often linked to other competencies, such as socio-communicative competencies.

The number of coded segments of competence characteristics suggests that the interviewees ascribed the highest importance to socio-communicative competencies. Most interviewees referred to so-called “soft skills” as an important competency, which future sport managers need to possess. However, the interviewees used the term in various ways, most often when they meant a competency other than “knowledge”. Therefore, socio-communicative competencies need to be understood as a complex phenomenon. Teamwork appeared to be the single most important competency. Socio-communicative competencies, which are particularly important in sport organisations from the non-profit sector, included empathy, which emerged as an inductive category in the content analysis, customer/service orientation and networking. Interestingly, teamwork was not a competency that the interviewees from non-profit sport organisations regarded as particularly important. As most important socio-communicative competencies in professional sports clubs, the interviewees highlighted customer/service orientation, teamwork, networking and oral communication skills. For the representatives of private sports businesses, teamwork was the competency that they referred to most often. Moreover, they regarded it as an essential competency for future sport managers to work in their organisations. In addition, networking in general and “modern networking” as a form of informal communication within the organisation was regarded as important in private sports businesses. The same applied to oral communication skills, whereby the interviewees made a particular reference to English language proficiency for future sport managers. Furthermore, customer/service orientation played an important role

in the private sector as well. The representatives of the public sector referred to networking as an important competency.

The capacity to make decisions emerged as the most critical activity and action competency across all sectors. However, the interviewees referred to different aspects of decision-making, such as showing responsibility for decisions taken, decision-making as a team process, as well as guiding and preparing decisions as part of the decision making process. The other activity and action competencies which are relevant included passion, applying theoretical knowledge into practice, critical reflection and flexibility/mobility. Passion or organisational identification appeared to be critical in professional sports clubs and private sports businesses. It is interesting to note that neither critical thinking nor ethical thinking (second most important competency according to the results of the previous quantitative study) were regarded as important in the private sector.

When it comes to methods and professional competencies, it was difficult to find similarities and differences between sport organisations from the four sectors. There emerged three main pillars in this competence class, which are relevant across all sectors: digital competencies, analytical skills and specialised (sport management) knowledge. Concerning the latter, specialised knowledge was perceived to be helpful in non-profit and public sector sport organisations. Generic IT-skills were regarded as important competencies across all sectors. However, more specialised digital competencies appeared to be less important for sport management graduates, since the employers seem to prefer IT/digitalisation specialists for jobs in this regard.

#### 4.2.3 Job development, qualifications and recruitment

##### *Job development*

The results of the previous quantitative survey suggest that there are two large functional areas, which promise to become more important in the future and develop new job opportunities in the sport labour market. These functional areas were summarised as “PR & (Social Media-) Marketing” and “Project Management”. In the qualitative study, the participants were asked whether they agreed with this result as well as to explain the consequences and meanings of this development to them. The latter functional area presented some challenges, as many of the interviewees were irritated by the term project management as a future job position, as the quote of one representative from a professional sports club showed:

*“Project management is a [...] matter of definition for me. It is too woolly for me, because project management is something that I expect from everyone in every department.” (C1)*

Following this idea of project management as a prerequisite for other jobs, the interviewees were asked to describe other positions, which they would consider to be developing within their organisation. All representatives of private sports businesses and professional sports

clubs focused on positions within sales, linking this to the commercial activities, which these organisations (increasingly) undertake. The same representative described the importance of sales as a functional area for the club:

*“In our case, the fastest growing areas right now are the sales areas, because of course we prioritise the topic commercialisation in the short, medium and long term and structure our sales areas correspondingly.” (C1)*

Representatives of the public and non-profit sector referred to the importance of consultants. The representatives of non-profit sport organisations argued that, due to their professionalisation, umbrella organisations need to support the federations and non-profit sports clubs with consultants specific to their needs. One representative of a public sector sport organisation talked about the need for consultants for the local authority districts and municipalities concerning both facility management and the application for and organisation of sport events.

Two representatives of sport organisations from the non-profit sector and from professional sports clubs supported the results from the previous quantitative survey, which suggested that the functional area of “PR & (Social Media-) Marketing” has grown fastest and has offered new job opportunities in various sectors. The importance of this functional area in the future for sport organisations from the public sector seemed to be low. Table 49 presents exemplary interview accounts of the representatives of sport organisations from three sectors concerning growing job opportunities in “PR & (Social Media-) Marketing”.

Table 49: *Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning growing job opportunities in the functional area of PR & (Social Media-) Marketing (own illustration)*

<b>Non-profit sport organisations</b>	<b>Professional sports clubs</b>
<p><i>“Well, Public Relations devours more and more resources, you can say it like that. Do good and make it known has top priority here, as well. But it is not the case that we need a higher number of people in this sector.” (NP1)</i></p> <p><i>“It is indeed true, yes. It applies to us, if I compare that now. Seven years ago, when I started in the association, there was actually nobody responsible for that area of communication, marketing. But it was rather an interface and in the end, we represented it via the professional team’s department. So there is (I: mm-hm) a department. And now we have it here, now there are already ten people in the area communication, marketing, sponsoring, which for us</i></p>	<p><i>“Of course, by now we have one for marketing and one for public relations. Previously, one position was responsible for both.” (C3)</i></p> <p><i>“And the topic digital content, social media, is of course [...] also a field that is growing.” (C2)</i></p>



<p><i>is always linked with project management. That means, definitely.” (NP2)</i></p> <p><i>“One point that for sure is going to grow, I do believe this, is the issue of marketing. So, where could associations market services that they offer, in a different way. And I could easily imagine that there will be potential to hire people there.” (NP3)</i></p>	
<b>Public sector sport organisations</b>	<b>Private sports businesses</b>  <p><i>“Well, it’s just this PR story again, which is extremely important, of course, because we want to tell our stories to others, and we need to tell these stories, and what media would you use. Well, I don’t know when [we have] started a print campaign lately. To publish something in Sport Bild, yes. It’s just like, it develops on and on [...].” (P3)</i></p>

To conclude, “PR & (Social Media-) Marketing” presents a growing functional area. However, this functional area might not be the most important area for all sport organisations from the four sectors in the future. The representatives of sport organisations from the private sector and one representative of a professional sports club emphasised sales repeatedly as their key functional areas for the future. It is interesting to notice that the representatives from public sector sport organisations did not ascribe importance to “PR & (Social Media-) Marketing”, which might be related to the fact that public sector sport organisations do not provide their services on markets.

## Qualifications

Following the aspects of growing functional areas in the sport labour market, the participants were asked to describe the qualifications<sup>14</sup> that a future sport manager would need to possess to successfully master the requirements in these functional areas. The results of the content analysis suggest a consensus between the interviewees that there were no hard prerequisites for the aforementioned jobs in the sport organisations in the four sectors. This consensus aligns with previous research and literature on the topic (Heinemann, Dietrich & Schubert, 1990; Kaiser & Beech, 2012) and highlights the complexity of the sport labour market. According to this research, a specific sport management profession has not emerged yet, and this will most certainly not change in the next decade or so.

It was of particular interest in this study to understand whether the interviewees differentiated between graduates with a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree on the one hand and between types of higher education institutions on the other, concerning the

---

<sup>14</sup> Specific degree, specialisation, previous work experience, etc.

requirements of job positions in their organisations. The coded segments of the content analysis present important aspects associated with qualifications: specialisation, work experience, level of education, type of higher education institution and other qualifications. The results reflect that a master's degree alone means no added value for the representatives of the sport organisations in the sample. All interviewees depicted previous work experience (e.g. internships) as an essential asset that sets applicants apart from each other. Therefore, master's degree programmes at higher education institutions, which give room for internships within their curricula, give more opportunities for graduates to gain work experience and in doing so meet the requirements of the sport labour market. The interviewees ascribed no meaning to the type of higher education institution, from which future sport managers graduated. Likewise, they gave little or no importance to the type of degree they have earned from these institutions. Three interviewees had a founded overview of the different sport management programmes. However, they did not express any binding preferences of a specific programme, from which future sport managers needed to graduate in order to meet their job requirements. One interviewee talked about a cooperation with a specific educational programme and emphasised the importance of this cooperation for selecting future sport managers for vacant positions. Table 50 presents exemplary interview accounts from the representatives of the sport organisations from the four sectors.

Table 50: *Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning required qualifications in the sport labour market (own illustration)*

<p><b>Non-profit sport organisations</b></p> <p><i>"Well as I've said, I then have a look at what he or she has done. And also the important things, such personality building things. If I read that someone was on travel for a year, I think it is sensational. Yes, it is rather great than somehow bad. So I prefer that over someone who somehow did ten quick internships in a row. [...] So, in concrete terms: When it comes to applications, I don't even have a look at any certificates." (NP2)</i></p> <p><i>"Internships are important, but not too many. Rather one, two longer ones. Because then you develop a profile more easily than when just having a quick look here and there, that is very, very difficult." (NP1)</i></p>	<p><b>Professional sports clubs</b></p> <p><i>"Well, I believe that sports management certainly is a good prerequisite. We also hired a few sports managers with degrees in [...] sports economics. I don't believe that what a sports manager brings along compared to a business administration graduate is a hiring criterion to the left or to the right. For us, both are study programmes that offer the prerequisites for being hired, as well as some other study programmes." (C2)</i></p>
<p><b>Public sector sport organisations</b></p> <p><i>"To be honest, it would be all the same to me. [...] What matters to me is that there is a passion for what he wants to do here, yes. Whether it is someone with a Bachelor, a Master or another degree, would make no difference to me." (PU3)</i></p>	<p><b>Private sports businesses</b></p> <p><i>"Yes, not necessarily anything specific, we hire people with different degrees." (P1)</i></p>

When asked specifically about differences between the various types of higher education institutions (e.g. public, private, and part time), it can be concluded that this aspect did not have any meaning to the interviewees. Furthermore, they clearly expressed, that they would not prefer graduates with a master's degree over graduates with a different type of degree when filling job vacancies. This is a surprising result, as one would have expected an investment in a master's degree to be of special value to the graduates. Furthermore, it is an interesting finding that the interviewees did not associate different meanings to different types of higher education institutions. There was only one exception from a public sector sport organisation, where the level of qualification determines the salary that one individual employee receives according to relevant effective bargaining agreements.

### *Recruitment*

Finally, the representatives of the sport organisations from the four sectors were asked to describe their recruitment processes. Table 51 presents the findings from the previous quantitative survey and shows that sport organisations use a multitude of different recruitment instruments. It was the objective of this open-ended question in the interview to find out about the most useful recruitment tools for the individual organisation.

*Table 51: Recruitment of future employees in different types of sport organisations (own illustration)*

<b>Recruitment of future employees (n=53)</b>	<b>%</b>
Announcements in organisation's home page	83 %
Personal contacts / word of mouth	82 %
Internal announcements	64 %
Internships	60 %
External announcements (in print media)	53 %
Online career portals	49 %
Social media	49 %
Employment agency/Recruitment consultant	21 %
Database of prior candidates	17 %
Student research projects	17 %
Business networks (LinkedIn, XING)	11 %
Fairs and professional events	4 %
Ads on Facebook or Google	4 %
Newsletter	4 %



The content analysis suggests that the sport organisations from the four sectors pursued individual recruitment strategies for new employees. However, the results need to be treated with caution, since not all interviewees considered themselves responsible or competent to speak about recruitment processes. In some cases, they speculated how it might be done in their organisation and trusted the specific departments/persons responsible to do their job. The three representatives of private sports businesses were confident about the “right” candidates finding them rather than going out to look for them. This result appears to be very interesting. It might be related to an effective signalling strategy of these organisations, in the sense of a good reputation or strong employer brands. The representatives of the sport organisations from the non-profit sector, on the other hand, referred to a very strong competition (also in terms of financial issues) with sport organisations from the other sectors for future sport management professionals and the challenges in finding the “right” people for the job.

Table 52 presents exemplary interview accounts on recruitment processes in the sport organisations from the four sectors.

Table 52: *Exemplary interview accounts from representatives of sport organisations concerning recruitment processes in the sport labour market (own illustration)*

<b>Non-profit sport organisations</b>  <i>“Especially when you have a great need, and we have grown considerably in the last years, then sometimes you need people with prior experience, with quality. And then the question is: where, how you find them. And this means that we really use classical job advertisements then. That means, we currently have one or two of them published. And we then publish them in the respective portals, sports portals, at universities.” (NP2)</i>	<b>Professional sports clubs</b>  <i>“Internships. It is actually the only one, because there you see these soft skills in day-to-day operations.” (C3)</i>  <i>“Well, we also have positions in the operating or assisting areas, where we take people directly from university, who proved themselves in internships here. This is also one way, but a way that is getting less and less common.” (C2)</i>
<b>Public sector sport organisations</b>  <i>“Of course, there often are network structures, for example from students who get involved in the region, in the city, and who communicate that they are doing such a training, so to say. And it can often be seen that in the end, someone who is well connected and positioned locally, no matter whether it was publicly advertised or not, that someone already holds a seat reservation somehow.” (PU2)</i>	<b>Private sports businesses</b>  <i>“Then of course also via connections. Yes, via people you know. And the freelance employees also via word-of-mouth recommendations. At the respective universities, this has proven to be the best way. People who are recommended by other people. This is the most effective way.” (P2)</i>

Two interviewees from non-profit sport organisations mentioned partnerships with higher education institutions and internal recruitment processes through internships or academic projects. Further means of recruitment in the sector included print announcements, online announcements on their homepage, internal career portals, as well as external online career portals.



One representative of a professional sport club referred to recruitment through internships as the most frequent way, while another representative explains internship recruitment was common in the past, but has lost in importance at present and for the future. The third representative spoke of a variety of ways in finding future employees, depending on the position and highlighted the role that networks play within recruitment processes. One representative of a professional football club spoke about an assessment centre as part of the recruitment process. In that sense an internship can help to “get a foot into the door, but not necessarily as an invitation to enter” (C2). According to the representatives from professional sports clubs, there is no lack of applicants and interested future employees in this sector. The challenge, however, would be finding the correct fit for the specific job.

All three interviewees representing private sports businesses referred to their homepage as a relevant recruitment tool. One representative highlighted a collaboration with higher education institutions for talent acquisition. Two representatives mentioned freelancers and/or internships as a first step towards a career within the organisation. This sector stood out with claiming to use recruitment consultants and chargeable online services such as LinkedIn and StepStone. None of the representatives seemed to be concerned with finding employees. Moreover, they referred to an abundance of applications for jobs.

For some job offers in public sector sport organisations, the law requires to use official announcements in the traditional sense of print media, as well as their own home page. One of the representatives mentioned informal networks, which emerged as an informal type of recruitment process. The other two representatives made distinctions between hierarchy levels of the positions. While the higher positions followed the traditional announcement, positions within specific projects or departments on an intermediate hierarchy level also made use of the parallel path of internal agreement next to the official/formal announcement as mentioned in the quote above (Table 52).

### *Conclusions*

The findings concerning the fastest growing functional areas in the different sport organisations are varied. Interestingly, as opposed to the previous qualitative survey, the interviewees did not recognise project management as a growing functional area, but rather as a necessary function, which supports other functional areas. PR & (Social Media-) Marketing appeared to provide new job opportunities in the four sectors. However, in some sport organisations from the private sector and professional sports clubs, sales appeared to be more important as a result of an expansion of commercial activities in these sectors. Representatives of non-profit sport organisations and public sector sport organisations referred to the importance of consultants.

In terms of qualifications, there appeared to be consensus between the interviewees that there were no hard prerequisites for the aforementioned jobs in the sport organisations in the four sectors. A degree in sport management or sport economics does not prove to be a

unique quality characteristic for the representatives from the four sectors. In addition, there were no preferences associated with graduates with a master's or a bachelor's degree when filling job vacancies in these organisations. Moreover, a master's degree alone might not prove to offer an added value. Furthermore, the interviewees did not express any preferences concerning the type of higher education institution, from which future sport managers graduated. What weighs more for the organisations in all sectors is work experience, for example gained in internship programmes.

In terms of recruitment, all sport organisations appeared to apply different strategies. They ranged from traditional print and online job posts in newspapers and industry journals to homepages. For private sector sport organisations, online career portals or social networks have been important. Some representatives highlighted the importance of internships as a recruitment instrument, but this did not seem to be important in all organisations. Public sector sport organisations continued using traditional job announcements due to legal requirements. However, there were also informal networks that have emerged as a recruitment instrument.

## **5 Conclusion, implications and outlook**

This report presented national findings for Germany, which emanated from a quantitative and qualitative study conducted as part of the two-year EU-funded Erasmus + research project *New Age of Sport Management Education in Europe (NASME)*, which has been conducted in nine different European countries.

The main objective of the project was to gain insights into the requirements of the sport labour market concerning the qualifications and competencies of sport management graduates. The sport labour market is characterised by a strong heterogeneity as a result of increasing functional differentiation and a rapid growth, which is fostered by global mega-trends, such as digitalisation, commercialisation and internationalisation. As a result, higher education institutions at national and European level will be presented recommendations for curriculum development, in order to better prepare their students for the requirements of the labour market.

The quantitative study has been conducted between December 2017 and April 2018. In total, 54 experts in the sport labour market in Germany participated in the survey. These experts filled leading positions in the field of sport management and included top tier managers (50 %) and other specialists with responsibilities for human resource management in their organisations. They represented typical sectors of the sport labour market (non-profit sport organisations, professional sports clubs, public sector sport organisations, private sports businesses). The majority of the respondents worked within non-profit sport organisations. Some 81 % of the respondents were male and 19 % were female.

The main research questions for the quantitative study included:



- Which positions including their tasks, roles and activities exist currently and in the future in the sport labour market?
- Which competency requirements do the employers address currently and in the future to (prospective) job holders?
- How do these aspects affect recruitment processes currently and in the future?

Subsequently to the quantitative study, the qualitative study has been conducted between December 2018 and February 2019. Some 12 experts in the sport labour market in Germany were interviewed. Again, the interviewees filled leading positions in their respective sport organisations. Only one of the interviewees was female. It was the objective of the qualitative study to gain a deeper understanding of the results of the previous quantitative study, in particular concerning trends, competencies, job development and recruitment.

First, the main conclusions emanating from the results of the quantitative and qualitative study are presented. The conclusions consider similarities and differences between the sport organisations in the four sectors in Germany (5.1). Based on the conclusions, there are implications for curriculum development at higher education institutions and organisations in the sport labour market in Germany. Therefore, recommendations for the future sport management curriculum at higher education institutions in Germany are presented (5.2). These recommendations are illustrated exemplarily with a short case on how the findings from the present study have been implemented in developing a seminar in the Master's Degree Programme in Sport Management at Leipzig University, which is represented by the authors of this report (5.3). This is followed by giving recommendations for the sport labour market to support the development of the future sport management curriculum (5.4). The report ends with some limitations of the project (5.5) and an outlook (5.6).

## **5.1 Conclusion**

Digitalisation appears to be a trend for non-profit sport organisations, which certainly affects their operations and service delivery. However, digitalisation does not appear to be a key trend. The socio-demographics of the individuals in non-profit sport organisations are diversified, which means that these organisations will also need to use traditional forms of service delivery, most certainly supported by processes of digitalisation. In addition, non-profit sport organisations tend to have difficulties to implement digital structures and processes due to financial constraints. Financial constraints increase the need for non-profit sports clubs to engage in commercial activities to generate new income. Furthermore, these organisations attempt at improving their service quality, partly also as a result of external pressures from private sports businesses, such as fitness studios and health service providers. However, commercialisation does not appear to be a trend yet that affects non-profit sport organisations notably. Because of their domestic reach, internationalisation does not affect non-profit sport organisations. An increasing service or customer orientation is also reflected in the importance of this socio-communicative competency for future sport managers in these

organisations. Furthermore, empathy and networking are important socio-communicative competencies in non-profit sport organisations. Next to an affinity to sport, leadership skills are important personal competencies, mainly because non-profit sport organisations strongly rely on volunteers, which require a special form of leadership. The capacity to make decisions emerges as an important activity and action competency, while specialised knowledge as well as generic IT skills mean critical methods and professional competencies. The need for specialised knowledge might be related to the fact that consultants are regarded as important jobs in non-profit sport organisations in the future.

For professional sports clubs, digitalisation is more than just a trend that affects their organisations. In fact, it means a prerequisite for staying competitive in their markets or environments. Moreover, digitalisation is regarded as a key trend that might spur the commercialisation and internationalisation of professional sports clubs, as can be observed with a growing number of professional eSports teams as part of a professional sports club. Internationalisation, such as collaborating with sponsors or professional sports clubs from abroad, plays an increasingly important role. However, the specificity of each sport needs to be considered. While it is easier to internationalise for clubs with globally popular sports, such as football or basketball, it is less feasible to do so for sports clubs with a regional/domestic popularity, such as handball. While leadership is an important personal competency, it is the socio-communicative competencies in particular, which stand out in importance for professional sports clubs. These competencies include customer/service orientation, teamwork, networking and oral communication skills. While customer service/orientation means an important competency, which is needed for the ongoing commercialisation in the sector, oral communication skills (also in combination with English language proficiency) is critical for increasing international business in these organisations. The capacity to make decisions and passion are essential activity and action competencies, while digital competencies and analytical skills are critical methods and professional competencies (as noted across all sectors). Alongside an ongoing commercialisation and an increasing digitalisation, the fastest growing functional areas are within PR & (Social Media) Marketing and Sales. Professional sports clubs recruit future sport managers in a variety of ways. For some it is the traditional job post in a newspaper or industry journal, while for others an internship opens the door for new sport managers to find a job in a professional sports club. It also appears that some professional sports clubs are associated with strong employer brands, since it is the right candidates that actively approach these clubs.

Digitalisation, commercialisation and internationalisation are trends that affect public sector sport organisations to some extent. However, their magnitude appears to be lower. Digitalisation affects processes of information delivery and administration of public sport infrastructure. Commercialisation does not affect public sector sport organisations directly. However, there appears to be an increasing number of sport organisations emerging from the private sector, which take over services that are regarded as public services traditionally, such

as in education (higher education institutions) and health. Internationalisation does not seem to have any remarkable effect on sport organisations from the public sector. Methods and professional competencies, such as specialised knowledge, are more important in public sector sport organisations than the other three competence classes. Affinity to sport and teamwork seem to be relevant to some extent. The findings concerning important future competencies in sport organisations in the public sector may reflect the bureaucratic logic of these organisations, which appear to necessitate methods and professional competencies more importantly. A similar association can be found concerning the fastest growing functional areas, which are less related to PR & (Social Media) Marketing and Sales. As with sport organisations in the non-profit sector, there appears to be an increasing need of consultancy work in the context of public sport infrastructure and events on a municipal or regional level. Concerning recruitment, public sector sport organisations seem to use more traditional job announcements, which are partly due to legal requirements. However, there are also informal networks that emerge as a recruitment instrument in the public sector.

Similar to professional sports clubs, digitalisation means a key driver for future competitiveness in the market for private sports businesses. The digital transformation affects positively both internal working processes, such as logistics, and external processes, such as marketing and sales. Likewise, it functions as a stimulus for commercial activities and internationalisation. Since private sports businesses offer commercial products per definition, commercialisation is not a trend in this sector. For most sport organisations in the sample, global business activities contribute to revenues much more than domestic activities, which means that internationalisation affects these organisations strongly at present and in the future. An affinity to sport means an important personal competency in private sports businesses, as well. As partly relevant to descriptions from sport organisations from the other sectors, the representatives from private sports businesses do not necessarily associate an affinity to sport with a degree in sport management or sport economics, but more with a (volunteer) activity in sport, such as recreational athlete or coach. Leadership skills appear to be important as well, and competency development in this aspect is recommended to be an integral part of sport management study programmes. Since the survival of private sports businesses heavily depends on their customers, it is hardly surprising that service/customer orientation results to be an important socio-communicative competency in private sports businesses. In particular, teamwork means a prerequisite for successful work in the private sports sector. In addition, networking in general and “modern networking” as a form of informal communication within the organisation is important in private sports businesses. The same applies to oral communication skills, which also includes English language proficiency for future sport managers. In many private sports businesses, English is the commonly used company language due to their largely international business activities. As in other sectors, the capacity to make decisions emerges as an important action and activity competency. In addition, passion for and identification with the organisation is critical to future sport managers. Ethical commitment appears to be an emerging important competency for the



sector. As in other sectors, digital competencies play an important role in an increasingly digital environment in private sports businesses. However, it is more the generic IT-skills, which are important for future sport managers than specialised digital competencies, which are more expected from IT specialists. Both the mega-trends affecting private sports businesses and the required competencies support the finding that the fastest growing positions are in the areas of Sales and PR & (Social Media) Marketing. In order to recruit future sport managers, these private sports businesses use a variety of tools. However, they use (business) social media and online career portals more often than the organisations from the other sectors.

Digitalisation, commercialisation and internationalisation are mega-trends. However, their importance varies between the four sectors. There did not appear to be further mega-trends to emerge, which might be the result of a limitation in the research design. However, there is an increasing awareness about aspects of sustainability and good governance in sport organisations in some sectors. Whether these aspects will transform into mega-trends and whether other trends will emerge in the near future is an interesting avenue for future qualitative research.

An increasing awareness of these aspects might also imply that future sport managers need to be able to think critically and ethically. This has not emerged as an important competency in the qualitative study, although it was indicated as one of the top competencies in private sports businesses in the previous quantitative study. Concerning important competencies required for future sport managers, in general, the findings from the qualitative study suggest that so-called “soft skills” are of major importance. The interviewees almost used the term as a panacea to refer to competencies, which are different to methods and professional competencies, such as knowledge. Further qualitative research concerning the subjective meanings of these “soft skills” with employers in the sport labour market is therefore recommended.

The findings from the qualitative study also suggest a paradigm shift concerning recruitment policies. While methods and professional competencies, as proven with good grades in transcripts of records and degrees, appeared to be the major quality characteristics of a sport management graduate in the past, the employers in the sport labour market nowadays regard personal, socio-communicative and activity and action competencies as quality labels. For example, while travelling during studies might have been interpreted as slack in the past, it is now regarded as an important activity to gain foreign language and intercultural skills. It is a further interesting finding that almost all sport organisations regard an affinity to sport as an important personal competency. However, they do not necessarily assume that a graduate with a bachelor’s or master’s degree in Sport Management or Sport Economics possesses this affinity to sport. This finding may have interesting implications for the recruitment of future sport managers, as well as for higher education institutions when selecting applicants for sport management study programmes. The sport organisations from the four sectors use a variety



of instruments to recruit new employees. Some recruitment processes are more common in some sectors than in others. While sport organisations from the private sector use (business) social media and online career portals more often, sport organisations from the public sector more commonly use traditional forms, such as job advertisements. However, some sport organisations in the public sector fill vacancies differently, for example through informal network relationships. These developments can be regarded as evidence of a diversification of recruitment processes across all sectors.

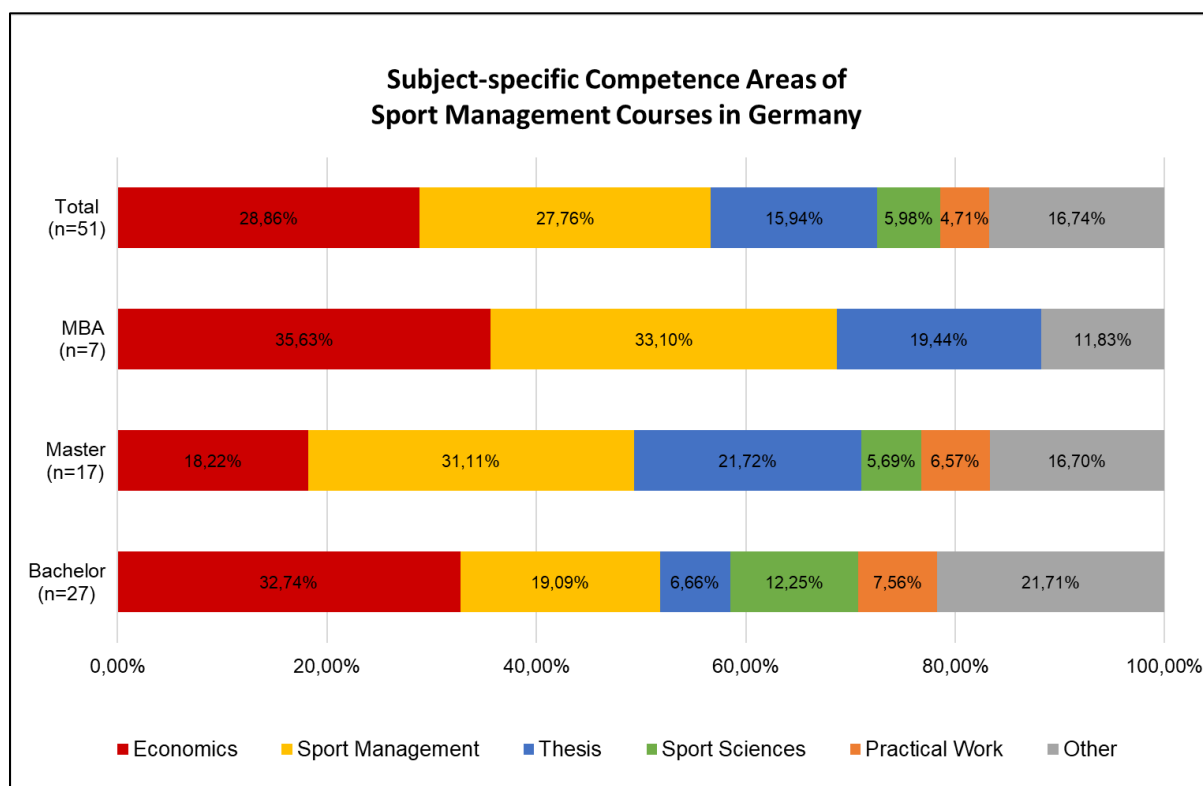
It is an interesting finding from the qualitative study that a master's degree alone means no benefit for the various sport organisations from the four sectors. What weighs more for these organisations in setting applicants apart from each other is previous work experience (e.g. internships). Furthermore, the type of higher education institution, from which future sport managers graduated, does not seem to make a difference for the sport organisations in the four sectors. In addition, there seem to exist no binding preferences of a specific programme, from which future sport managers need to graduate in order to meet their job requirements.

To conclude, it can be stated that sport management programmes at higher education institutions in Germany are generally well suited for conveying the competencies future sport managers need. However, to successfully fulfil the "contractual" requirement (Jensen & Meckling, 1976) by the sport labour market, an understanding of the current and future requirements of the sport labour market is of great importance and needs to be considered. What follows are recommendations for the future sport management curriculum at higher education institutions in Germany.

### ***5.2 Recommendation for the future sport management curriculum***

Thus far, higher education institutions in Germany have not applied a standardised sport management curriculum. Germany as a federalist state entrusts each of the 16 federal states the right to govern laws and regulations concerning higher education. Therefore, a standardised sport management curriculum will also be very unlikely to occur in the near future. The results of the present study, however, have implications for the future sport management curriculum in Germany.

Looking at the current sport management curriculum in Germany, Dunkel et al. (2018) examined the study regulations and module handbooks of all 51 sport management study programmes (to the status of 2016). Because these handbooks only offer information concerning subject-specific competencies, it is difficult to make assumptions about personal, socio-communicative and activity and action competencies. According to the knowledge of the authors, there exist no guidelines, which offer assistance in developing curricula according to future competencies. Figure 15 presents an overview of the distribution of subject-specific competence areas in sport management study programmes in Germany.



*Figure 15: Subject-specific competence areas of sport management courses in Germany (Dunkel et al., 2018, 55)*

Based on the study of Dunkel et al. (2018), it can be concluded that the competence areas of “practical work”, “thesis” and “other” focus on competencies that go beyond a subject-specific knowledge transfer and can therefore focus on competencies such as networking, teamwork, capacity of applying knowledge in practice as well as the ability to work autonomously.

A future sport management curriculum in Germany needs to focus on learning outcomes of students and follow a competence orientation for all study modules. This approach is in line with the central postulate of the Bologna Declaration, which is the promotion of employability of students regardless of the disciplinary orientation of their studies and their preparation for broadly based occupational fields (Schaper, 2012). This approach places challenges on higher education institutions, since learning situations need to be application-oriented and practice-oriented, as well as geared to the professional demands to be mastered in one field (HRK, 2013). An increasingly complex and dynamic working environment also requires the sport management curriculum to consider social developments and mega-trends, such as digitalisation, commercialisation and internationalisation. The main recommendations emanating from the present study for the future sport management curriculum in Germany are presented in Table 53.



Table 53: *Recommendations for the future sport management curriculum in Germany*

Recommendations for the future sport management curriculum in Germany	
1.	Develop teamwork through adjusted learning environments and assessment methods
2.	Develop digital competencies by integrating or strengthening subject-specific courses concerning (applied) digital marketing and social media management
3.	Implement or expand the use of virtual media platforms in learning activities
4.	Integrate (compulsory) internships in study programmes (bachelor' and master's degree)
5.	Develop ability to work autonomously through independent learning and adapted assessment methods
6.	Develop sponsorship and customer relationship management skills through role-playing situations
7.	Promote foreign language courses (bachelor's degree) and integrate English as a classroom language (master's degree)
8.	Promote international exchange of students, lecturers and researchers
9.	Implement generalist education (bachelor's degree) with sector-specific education and electives (master's degree)

Teamwork resulted to be the most important future competency for sport managers. Therefore, it is recommended for sport management study programmes in Germany to respond to this necessity, by implementing learning activities and assessment forms that involve teamwork between students, such as group work on presentations, projects and case studies.

Digital marketing stands out as the top special competency and necessitates particular action within curriculum development. This finding is substantiated by the Importance-Performance-Analysis (IPA), which allocates digital marketing to the first quadrant (Q1 = concentrate here). Applying social media in work is located in the first quadrant, as well. Based on these findings, it is recommended to integrate a mandatory module of (applied) digital marketing in all bachelor's degrees and to give students the opportunity to develop further these skills optionally with more emphasis on strategic and international aspects in the master's degrees. Based on sound theoretical input, this module should also focus on the application of social media management in work.

The use of virtual media platforms appeared to be the second most important special competency. Therefore, the implementation or expansion of blended learning tools in some of the modules is recommended. Virtual media platforms promote interaction and engagement between students and teaching staff, as well as between students outside of contact hours in the classroom. Furthermore, teaching staff can provide additional learning materials and in doing so better accentuate independent learning, as a method to give students the opportunity to develop working autonomously. Virtual media platforms offer an abundance of assessment methods that are transparent for students and efficient for teaching

staff. In addition, it is recommended to use the flipped classroom method more often as an alternative to the traditional lecture format (Bergmann & Sams, 2012).

The results of the qualitative study, in particular, highlighted the importance of internships for future sport managers across all sectors. Although the interviewees often demanded internships to last for at least three months, a compulsory internship period of a minimum of six weeks within the bachelor's degrees and an optional internship period of a minimum of six weeks within the master's degrees is recommended for the future sport management curriculum. Internships give students the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in practice and become acquainted with potential employers and colleagues in their future working areas. Social competencies and organisational skills are also developed through internships.

Graduates from sport management study programmes need to be able to work autonomously. The results from both the quantitative and qualitative data analysis highlight the diversity of competencies, which students need to develop during their studies. Promoting the ability to work autonomously through independent learning periods with clear assignments is therefore strongly recommended. Furthermore, in order to promote autonomous work, the final thesis of sport management study programmes should contribute a *minimum* of 10 % of the final grade for bachelor's degrees and 30 % of the final grade for master's degrees. In this context, it is suggested that for both bachelor's thesis and master's thesis, there is an orientation and guidance towards this final academic paper from early on, for example through specifically tailored thesis seminars.

The Importance-Performance-Analysis (IPA) yielded the subject-specific competencies of sponsorship management and customer relationship management (CRM) within the first quadrant (Q1 = concentrate here). Therefore, it is recommended to include role-playing situations within seminars and as assessment methods that focus on these topics. These activities are particularly relevant for practice, since sport managers need to assess and negotiate sponsorship proposals and communicate with customers face-to-face more often than not. In order to enhance networking opportunities for students, it is recommended to invite guest lecturers being experts in the relevant fields.

According to the Importance-Performance-Analysis (IPA), knowledge of a second language appeared to be an important special competency. It is recommended to obligate students to take at least one course in a foreign language within the bachelor's degrees. Since English is becoming increasingly lingua franca in many sport organisations in the private sector, English language courses are recommended, in particular. Enhanced foreign language skills will prepare students for the increasing internationalisation of at least some sectors in the sport labour market. Furthermore, the integration of English as a classroom language in subject-specific sport management modules within Master's degree programmes is recommended, in order to improve technical terminology (business language) with the students.

In addition to promoting foreign language skills, international exchange for both students and teaching staff needs to be strongly encouraged, by further developing exchange programmes (e.g. Erasmus). The results of both the quantitative and the qualitative data analysis show the increasing importance of internationalisation in the context of sport management. Furthermore, sport management study programmes should use the opportunities given by EU-funded exchange programmes by inviting international guest lecturers and advocating a semester abroad for students. Furthermore, international cooperation and exchange needs to include research activities, whereby higher education institutions, business organisations and non-governmental organisations collaborate. Encouraging international research cooperation and transferring their diversified findings into teaching practice in sport management study programmes contributes to a better fit between labour market and education.

The findings of the quantitative and qualitative studies show little to no differences concerning future competency requirements between the sectors, which is reflected in the recommendations outlined above. Concluding, it is recommended to focus on a generalist sport management education in Germany, both at bachelor's level and at master's level. However, sector-specific aspects need to be recognised. They justify differentiation within the study programmes and the design of specific courses for specific (sectorial) target groups. Sector-specific electives in the master's degree programmes as a reasonable response to these differences are suggested.

### ***5.3 Implementation of findings in sport management curriculum at Leipzig University***

This section introduces an applied case of how the findings of the present study have been implemented for developing the seminar "Sport and Events" as part of the 10 ECTS credit points module "Media and Event Management" within the curriculum of the Master's Degree Programme in Sport Management at Leipzig University in the summer semester 2018. This module is recommended for students in their second semester in the Sport Management Master's Degree Programme at Leipzig University and is regularly instructed in the summer semester. The case describes how a learning environment was created that both promotes the acquisition of various competencies and considers the identified mega-trends in the sport labour market.

Based on "Constructive Alignment" (Biggs, 2003), the learning environment and situations were created in such a way that they mean a real alternative to the traditional lecture, in which the students as learners take a more active role inside and outside of the classroom. Constructive alignment is a didactic concept, which promotes curriculum development, since it combines learning outcomes, teaching and learning processes, and assessment tasks. According to Biggs (ibid), the concept entails two aspects: "constructive" bases on the idea that students construct meaning in relevant learning situations, whereby the teacher's role is that of a catalyst or moderator. In this sense, "alignment" refers to the teacher's role, which

is to create a learning environment that is appropriate to achieving desired learning outcomes. Moreover, teaching methods and assessment tasks are aligned with the intended learning outcomes. This approach promotes the “shift from teaching to learning”, which has become a major direction in the educational discourse since the 1990s. This change of perspective goes along with the objectives of the Bologna process, which emphasise competencies as learning outcomes and didactic arrangements that engage students and necessitates corresponding assessment (Wildt & Wildt, 2011).

There are three major steps of curriculum development, based on the concept of constructive alignment.

First, the intended learning outcomes for the seminar “Sport and Events” needed to be defined. After successful completion of the seminar, the students ideally have acquired competencies related to the following intended learning outcomes:

- to analyse systematically business and management problems in a situational context,
- to assess top level competitive sports,
- to make strategic decisions and back up these decisions in consulting a hypothetical client,
- to apply modern information technology,
- to be able to work in a team under time pressure, and
- to communicate professionally in English (both oral and written).

In a second step, those teaching and learning activities were defined, which likely lead to the intended learning outcomes or competence acquisition. An established simulation game, “The International Strategic Case Study Competition”, was used. Within this simulation game, six higher education institutions with a profile in sport management in Germany take part in the competition. As part of an independent study module, bachelor’s and master’s students compete in three rounds in a virtual environment via video conference calls. The best teams of each institution would then compete in a final at the German Olympic Academy in Frankfurt in November 2018. “The International Strategic Case Study Competition” follows the idea of the Harvard Case Study Method (Hammond, 2002). This method provokes practice and repetition of problem solving, critical reflection, and decision-making. Case studies combine theory and practice to create a dynamic, interactive learning environment with an active involvement of students. They therefore contribute significantly to the holistic acquisition of competencies in sport management education (Apostolopoulou, 2011). For 2018, the case study, which the students needed to work with, was based on a specifically described, initial (fictional) situation<sup>15</sup>. Based on the situation, the students were assigned three tasks:

---

<sup>15</sup> The last time Germany hosted the Olympic Games was in Munich 1972. Since then, several attempts have failed to bring the Olympic Games back to Germany: Hamburg 2024 (negative public referendum), Munich 2022



## Task 1:

- to found a consultancy (3-6 persons),
- to launch a pitch for the consulting project of the DOSB presenting their consultancy and demonstrating that they have enough expert knowledge and practical experience for this project, and
- to provide a ranked list of the four preferred cities/regions for the German bid.

## Task 2:

- to provide a SWOT-Analysis of the city/region their consultancy proposed for the 2032 Games focusing on the unique selling proposition as well as the greatest weakness of the chosen city/region, and
- to give strategic recommendations for action.

## Task 3:

- to provide three suggestions for legacies they want to create by hosting the Games in the chosen city/region, and
- to deliver their “unique legacy vision”.

In a third step, those assessment tasks were defined, which reflect the intended learning outcomes as provided in the teaching and learning environment (Biggs, 2003). The national trend leads away from traditional assessment tasks like written exams towards complex assessments that actually reflect competency acquisition and achievement of intended learning outcomes. In every round, the groups needed to prepare a written document as well as an oral presentation, which were followed by questions from fictional “DOSB executive board members”, represented by lecturers from the participating higher education institutions. The groups were assessed by lecturers from their own higher education institution (round 1), and by lecturers from previously determined co-operating partner institutions (rounds 2 and 3), according to specific assessment criteria (see figure 16). The assessment criteria were made transparent to the students beforehand and reflected after each round. The final grade was awarded based on the points acquired in each round.

---

(negative public referendum) and Leipzig 2012 (awarded to London). Currently, there is a new initiative trying to bring the Games to North Rhine-Westphalia. A first plan that entails 13 cities for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games was unveiled and the concept for a possible bid for the Rhein-Ruhr region was presented. However, the DOSB wants to seek further options to select the city/region within Germany that is most suitable to compete internationally. Therefore, the DOSB is now looking for external help from a (fictional) business consultancy. In December 2017, the IOC published its new strategic approach for legacy. A positive legacy has become a key rationale when bidding for or hosting Olympic Games. For the IOC, legacy has become a focal point in the Agenda 2020, and the importance of legacy is also established in Rule 2.14 of the Olympic Charter (IOC, 2017). Next to a first market analysis, the DOSB is looking for a vision for the next Olympic Games in Germany to take on a positive legacy.

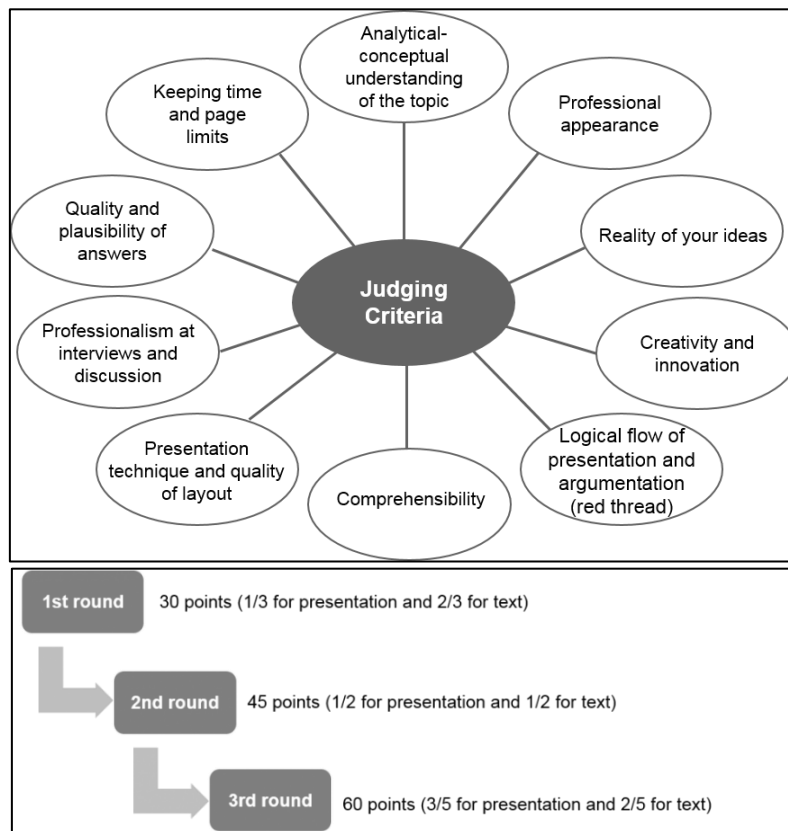


Figure 16: Assessment criteria

Despite the many advantages, the implementation of this exemplary teaching and learning concept faces certain challenges that need to be addressed to ensure an efficient transfer into practice:

- variation in background knowledge concerning the content and context,
- high workload associated with time pressure,
- lack of a formal (summative) grading for the outcome within the study module (changed to formal grading in summer term 2019),
- availability and functionality of a video conference tool, and
- variation in English language skills.

Based on the present study, which involved a quantitative survey and qualitative interviews with experts from the sport labour market, recommendations for the future sport management curriculum have been developed. However, in order to implement these recommendations successfully, the support of organisations in the sport labour market is required.

#### **5.4 Requests to sport labour market**

In the qualitative interviews, representatives of different sport organisations complained about the theory-focused education, which only to a low degree proves to be applicable in the industry. Furthermore, they emphasised a lack of transparency regarding the design of sport management study programmes. What the labour market seeks is graduates with practical experience and a high capability of applying knowledge. Previous work experience, personal contacts and knowledge of the business play the biggest role in the decision of hiring new employees. Concluding from these thoughts and results, it could be argued that there is a “big gap” between the labour market and higher education institutions. The results of both the quantitative and qualitative data analysis highlight the demand for an affinity to sport, teamwork, and what was summed up as “passion and attitude” of future employees. Concerning the increasing internationalisation, the development of intercultural competencies as well as foreign language skills was also repeatedly emphasised.

The present study aimed at decreasing the gap between the labour market and higher education institutions within sport management to provide a better match between qualifications required and qualifications provided. Altogether, seven recommendations have been developed, which may be useful to better link education and business. These recommendations take more the form of requests addressed at the sport organisations in the four sectors in Germany and are presented in Table 54.

Table 54: *Requests to sport labour market in order to support the future sport management curriculum in Germany*

Requests to sport labour market in order to support the sport management curriculum in Germany
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being open for dialogue with higher education institutions</li> <li>2. Offer reputable internships for students at both bachelor’s and master’s level</li> <li>3. Enter into long-term cooperation with higher education institutions</li> <li>4. Support applied research through final thesis work</li> <li>5. Provide case studies from real life for students to practice on</li> <li>6. Proactively reach out to students and graduates</li> <li>7. Offer jobs or trainee positions for young professionals in the field</li> </ol>

The first step in decreasing the gap would be an increased dialogue between representatives of sport management study programmes and organisations in the sport labour market. Dialogues can take the form of conferences, podium discussions, workshops and networking events, in which both actors can learn from each other and thus better understand the reasons behind the curricula and entry requirements respectively. The dialogue will certainly also need to involve other stakeholders, such as political actors at regional and national level.





In order to gain work experience, students need opportunities to work. Alongside the recommendation for higher education institutions to integrate compulsory internships within sport management study programmes, the wish towards the labour market to offer reputable internship positions for sport management students is expressed. Internships can be beneficial for both sides if guided and taken seriously. The federal law on minimum wages sets barriers for students to gain work experience in voluntary internship arrangements, since only mandatory internships are exempt from the law on minimum wages. Organisations in the sport labour market are invited to support higher education institutions in raising these issues on a policy level (e.g. in discussing alternative ways of compensation, such as scholarships). In particular, it can be assumed that students at master's level already possess a set of qualifications and experience, which enables them to create value during an internship for sport organisations.

An institutionalised and well-coordinated cooperation between external business partners and higher education institutions is of great importance if the objective of a better match between labour market requirements and qualifications offered by higher education institutions is to be achieved. Forms of cooperation need to be long-term and should include organisations from different sectors, thus considering the diversity and heterogeneity of the field. Cooperation could include applied project management scenarios, research projects, and external presentations from representatives of the organisations within study programmes as well as field visits of students to the respective sport organisations. Students have the advantage to look behind the scenes, and they can apply their skills to contribute to resolve real world problems. Sport organisations also benefit from such arrangements, as they can screen prospective interns and employees.

Through cooperation and internships, sport organisations obtain insights into the skills and competencies of students and the contents being covered in sport management study programmes. The qualitative interviews indicated that organisations, which collaborate with higher education institutions, use such collaborations for preparing and supporting the final thesis of bachelor's and master's students. This offers real field work for the students and has the goal to give concrete and valuable suggestions for further development in the respective organisation.

Concurrently, sport organisations are invited to provide case studies that exemplify real life situations in business and give students the opportunity to practice on (e.g. Harvard Case Method). Higher education institutions function as a protected space, in which making mistakes and practicing, and thus improving, need to be allowed and promoted. Using real life cases gives practice sessions credibility and can further motivate students to get involved.

Furthermore, sport organisations are advised to proactively reach out to students and graduates of sport management study programmes. It is conceivable to create open-door days for students and graduates alike for a look behind the scenes. Contributing to career fairs or



similar formats from the career services of higher education institutions would also decrease the gap. In addition, representatives of sport organisations are invited to participate in mentoring programmes for young professionals. In this context, the work of alumni networks also plays a vital role. Graduates of sport management study programmes should be encouraged to get involved in the alumni network of their former school or university. They could also serve as mentors to students.

Similar to the request of offering reputable internship positions, higher education institutions depend on the labour market to offer their graduates career opportunities. Trainee programmes for young professionals and aspiring young leaders could offer an interesting avenue for both the organisations (of all sectors) and for graduates of sport management study programmes.

Concluding, the importance of an improved dialogue between higher education and the labour market is accentuated. There is a need for both parties to make a step towards the other if sport management as a field is to grow further and advance professionally. After having provided recommendations for the future sport management curriculum and the roles that higher education institutions and the organisations in the sport labour market need to play, the next section will briefly discuss the limitations of the study.

### **5.5 Limitations**

The main objectives of the present study were to obtain a better understanding of the requirements of sport organisations in the labour market in Germany concerning competencies and qualifications of sport management graduates. This is particularly needed, since this specific market is characterised by heterogeneous structures (e.g. four sectors), a strong economic growth and a high relevance for society in general. As this study was part of the EU-funded research project *New Age of Sport Management Education in Europe (NASME)*, it was another objective to create a shared understanding for sport management education within nine European countries and to develop a set of recommendations for curriculum development, based on two data collection and analysis phases.

The study applied a mixed-methods sequential explanatory research design (Ivankova et al., 2006), since it was found particularly suitable for meeting the research objectives. While there were many advantages associated with this research design, there were also some procedural issues, which mainly occurred at the European level in the course of the project and are referred to as issues of priority, implementation and integration by Ivankova et al. (2006). Depending on the objectives of a project, decisions concerning procedural issues can either be made at the study design stage (top-down) or during the data collection and analysis process (bottom-up) and need clear communication within the project. Major decisions within the NASME project emerged in project meetings at different stages and were made by the project leadership and the partners. Each research group from the nine countries enjoyed

much freedom in deciding on procedural issues based on the individual interests of the researchers. While most of the partners focused on the quantitative part of the research project, some other partners prioritised the qualitative part of the research project.

Some basic parameters on the selection of participants, however, guided through the project. As for the quantitative data collection phase, a target population of 60 participants in each country was agreed upon. Concerning the qualitative data collection phase, it was the objective to recruit at least eight interview partners, whereby a part of them already participated in the quantitative data collection and another part did not. In addition, the participants in both data collection phases needed to be experts and decision makers in the sport labour market, representing non-profit sport organisations, professional sports clubs, public sector sport organisations and private sports businesses.

With 54 participants in the quantitative study, a satisfactory sample size was generated, although the target population of 60 has not been met in total. However, without certain limitations, a larger sample size might have been achieved. Although it was the initial objective to collect data on current competencies and future competencies in two separate phases, the project leadership and the partners decided to combine both phases, in order to manage time constraints concerning data collection within the two-year duration of the project. This decision, however, resulted in a rather extensive questionnaire, which some of the participants might have refused to answer in its current design (e.g. length, structure, focus).

For the qualitative data collection phase, a semi-structured interview guide was developed, which mainly based on the results of the quantitative data collection and analysis. The interview guide included questions relevant for all groups and questions, which were adjusted to the specific conditions in the respective country. Altogether, 12 participants were recruited for the qualitative study, which represents a larger sample size than the target size of at least eight interview partners.

Considering the sample sizes of both the quantitative and the qualitative study, it needs to be emphasised that the results are not representative for the heterogeneous sport labour market and for higher education institution with sport management study programmes. Therefore, the emanating implications and recommendations have been kept generalist and need to be reflected on carefully. For example, on a general basis there are different categories of students enrolled in sport management study programmes and graduates from these programmes, respectively. These categories include bachelor's students straight from school, master's students continuing their studies immediately after their bachelor's degree as well as master's students with previous work experience. Furthermore, these study programmes are run at different types of higher education institutions, such as public or private universities, universities of applied sciences or universities of cooperative education. In addition, these study programmes can be organised as full-time or part-time programmes and

might involve distant or blended learning formats. The presented educational implications therefore need adaptation for each study programme and higher education institution.

### **5.6 Outlook**

The NASME project has generated a set of interesting findings and recommendations, which will serve for better understanding sport management education and contribute to improving sport management curricula in Germany, and in the wider context of the NASME project, in Europe. A continuation of research activities in the sport labour market as well as in sport management education is strongly recommended, both at national and European level.

Future research could address the perspectives of different stakeholders on sport management education, such as current sport management students and graduates. How do they rate their current competencies as (upcoming) sport management professionals? Then, it can be better understood whether they already possess the future and core competencies required by the sport labour market. Such findings would offer additional insight when it comes to developing the future sport management curriculum. Furthermore, an understanding needs to be obtained on how the key global trends influence sport management organisations and higher education institutions and new key trends need to be identified.

However, in order to achieve a better match between the requirements of the sport labour market and the qualifications offered by higher education institutions, a broader academic and social discourse is suggested. This discourse should be cultivated at national and international conferences, necessitates the cooperation between sport management academics, educational scientists, experts in academic instruction and sport management practitioners, and involves other relevant stakeholders. This discourse needs to include a variety of issues related to sport management education, which have partly been identified in the present study. The results suggest that the sport management labour market does neither differentiate between a bachelor's and a master's degree as qualifications obtained, in the sense of ascribing a higher quality proposition to a master's degree, nor between the types of higher education institutions from which these qualifications are obtained. What does this then mean for the two cycle qualification system at various types of higher education institutions, such as universities, universities of higher education, and universities of cooperative education? What does this mean for public and private higher education institutions? Therefore, an understanding is needed about which types of higher education institutions are suited best to offer which types of qualification. In addition, mechanisms need to be developed, by which different types of higher education institutions can engage in academic and practice-oriented forms of cooperation, in order to promote employability of sport management graduates in various aspects, such as in developing inspiring learning environments and situations and in facilitating recruitment processes within sport organisations in the four sectors. The results of the present study also suggest that graduates



with a degree in sport management or sport economics are not necessarily preferred to graduates with a degree in business administration or similar when sport organisations need to fill sport-management-related positions. What does this mean for the overall recognition of sport management as a profession or academic discipline?

## 6 References

Adam, S.; Bauers, S. B. & Hovemann, G. (2019). Inevitable need for change – identifying and removing barriers to supporter participation in German professional football. *Sport in Society*. DOI: 10.1080/17430437.2019.1596082.

Apostolopoulou, A. (2011). Ten Years of Integrating Research and Practice Perspectives: A Guide to Sport Marketing Quarterly Case Studies. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 20, 227-241.

Arnold, R. (2015). Bildung nach Bologna! Die Anregungen der europäischen Hochschulreform [Education after Bologna! Incentives of the European higher education reform]. Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Bacon, D. R. (2003). A comparison of approaches to Importance-Performance Analysis. *International Journal of Market Research*, 45(1), 55–71.

Bayle, E. & Robinson, L. (2007). A framework for understanding the performance of national governing bodies of sport. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 7(3), 249-268.

Bergmann, J. & Sams, A. (2012). *Flip your classroom: Reach every student in every class every day*. International Society for Technology in Education.

Biggs, J. B. (2003). *Teaching for quality learning at university*. Buckingham: Open University Press/Society for Research into Higher Education.

Breuer, C. (Ed.) (2009). Sportentwicklungsbericht für Deutschland 2007/2008: Analyse zur Situation der Sportvereine in Deutschland [Sports Development Report for Germany 2007/2008: Analysis of the Situation of Sports Clubs in Germany]. Cologne: Strauss.

Bundesagentur für Arbeit [Federal Agency of Work]. (n.d.). Arbeitslosenquote in Deutschland von Dezember 2016 bis Dezember 2017 [Unemployment rate in Germany from December 2016 to December 2017]. In Statista - Das Statistik-Portal. Accessed online on 18 January 2018 at <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/1239/umfrage/aktuelle-arbeitslosenquote-in-deutschland-monatsdurchschnittswerte/>.

Bundesagentur für Arbeit [Federal Agency of Work]. (n.d.b). Jugendarbeitslosenquote (15 bis unter 25 Jahre) in Deutschland von 1998 bis 2017 [Youth unemployment rate (15 to under 25 years) in Germany from 1998 to 2017]. In Statista - Das Statistik-Portal. Accessed online on 19 January 2018 at <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/440534/umfrage/jugendarbeitslosenquote-in-deutschland/>.

Cowan, D. & Taylor, I. (2016). 'I'm proud of what I achieved; I'm also ashamed of what I done': A soccer coach's tale of sport, status and criminal behaviour. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 8, 505-518.

Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.

DFB (2017, 4 July.) Mitgliederstatistik [*Statistics of Members*]. Accessed online on 30 January 2018 at <https://www.dfb.de/verbandsstruktur/mitglieder/>

DOSB (n.d.) Profile of German Olympic Sport Confederation. Accessed online on 30 January 2018 at <http://www.dosb.de/en/organisation/wir-ueber-uns/dosb-profile/>

Dunkel, K., Wohlfart, O. & Wendeborn, T. (2018). Kompetenzen im Studiengang Sportmanagement – Eine Dokumentenanalyse zum fachspezifischen Kompetenzerwerb an deutschen Hochschulen. [*Competences in sports management programmes – a curricular analysis of specific competences to be obtained at German higher education institutions*]. *Zeitschrift für Studium und Lehre in der Sportwissenschaft* [*Journal of Studies and Teaching in Sport Science*], 1(2), 50-59.

Freyer, W. (2003). *Sport-Marketing – Handbuch für marktorientiertes Management im Sport* (3. Auflage). Wiesbaden: FIT.

Giulianotti, R. & Robertson, R. (2007). *Globalization and Sport*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Hammond, J. S. (2002). *Learning by the case method*. Boston: Harvard Business School.

Heinemann, K., Dietrich, K. & Schubert, M. (1990). Kommerzielle Sportanbieter. Angebot, Nachfrage und Beschäftigungschancen auf dem kommerziellen Sportmarkt [*Commercial sport suppliers. Supply, demand and employment opportunities in the commercial sport market*]. Schorndorf: Hofmann.

Heyse, V. & Erpenbeck, J. (2004). Kompetenztraining: 64 modulare Informations- und Trainingsprogramme für die betriebliche, pädagogische und psychologische Praxis [*Competence training: 64 modular information and training programmes for workplace, pedagogical and psychological practice*]. Schäffer-Poeschel.

HRK (2013). Europäische Studienreform - Empfehlung der 15. Mitgliederversammlung der Hochschulrektorenkonferenz Karlsruhe [*European Study Reform - Recommendation of the 15th General Assembly of the German Rectors' Conference Karlsruhe*], 19.11.2013. Bonn: HRK.

Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung [*Institute for Employment Research*]. (2017). Arbeitslosigkeit von Akademikern auf dem niedrigsten Stand nach 1980 [*Unemployment of academics at the lowest level after 1980*]. Pressemitteilung [*Press release*] from 10.10.2017.

Accessed online on 30 January 2018 at  
<http://www.iab.de/de/informationsservice/presse/presseinformationen/qualo2017.aspx>

IOC (2017). Legacy Strategic Approach – Moving Forward. Accessed on 30 August, 2018 at:  
<https://bit.ly/2Hw5wpb>

Ivankova, N., Creswell, J. & Stick, S. (2006). Using Mixed-Methods Sequential Explanatory Design: From Theory to Practice. *Field Methods*, 18 (3), 3-20.

Jensen, M. & Meckling, W. (1976). Theory of the firm: Managerial behavior, agency costs, and ownership structure. *Journal of Financial Economics* 3, 305-360.

Kaiser, S. & Beech, J. (2012). Perspectives of Sport-related Labour Market and Employment Research: The Need for a Specific Approach. *European Journal for Sport and Society* 2012, 9 (4), 287-304.

Kent, A. & Chelladurai, P. (2001). Perceived transformational leadership, organisational commitment, and citizenship behavior: A case study in intercollegiate athletics. *Journal of Sport Management*, 15(2), 135-159.

Kurscheidt, M. & Deitersen-Wieber, A. (2011). Sport governance in Germany. In C. Sobry (Ed.), *Sport governance in the world – a socio-historic approach* (p. 259-305). Paris: Éditions Le Manuscrit.

Martilla, J. A., & James, J. C. (1977). Importance-Performance Analysis. *Journal of Marketing*, 40(1), 77–79.

Mayring, P. (2010). Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse [Qualitative Content Analysis] (12<sup>th</sup> ed.). Beltz Verlag: Weinheim & Basel.

Molan, C., Matthews, J. & Arnold, R. (2016). Leadership off the pitch: the role of the manager in semi-professional football. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 16(3), 274-291.

Mrazek, J., & Hartmann-Tews, I. (2010). Diplom-Sportwissenschaftler/in -was nun? Absolventenstudie 2010 der Deutschen Sporthochschule Köln [*Diploma sports scientist - what now? Graduate study 2010 of the German Sport University Cologne*]. *KURIER*, 33 (2), Beilage.

Oh, H. (2001). Revisiting importance-performance analysis. *Tourism Management*, 22, 617–627.

Oja, B., Bass, J. & Gordon, B. (2015). Conceptualizing employee identification with sport organisations: Sport Employee Identification (SEI). *Sport Management Review*, 18, 583-595.

Petry, K., Froberg, K. & Madella, A. (2006). *Thematic network project AEHESIS "Aligning a European Higher Education Structure In Sport Science*. Cologne: German Sport University Cologne on behalf of ENSSEE.



Radaelli, C. (2003). The Europeanization of Public Policy. In K. Featherstone & C. Radaelli (Hrsg.), *The Politics of Europeanization* (S. 27-56). Oxford.

Schaper, N. (2012). Fachgutachten zur Kompetenzorientierung in Studium und Lehre [Expert report on competence orientation in study and teaching]. Bonn: HRK.

Smith, J. & Hodgkinson, P. (2009). Challenging neorealism: A response to Hammersley. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 15, 30-39.

Smith, B. & McGannon, K. (2018). Developing rigor in qualitative research: problems and opportunities within sport and exercise psychology. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 11 (1), 101-121.

Temple, B. (2008). Narrative analysis of written texts: reflexivity in cross language research. *Qualitative Research*, 8, 355-365.

The Future of Sports (2016) (Ed.). The Future of Sports Report 2016.

Tracy, S. (2010). Qualitative Quality: Eight “Big-Tent” Criteria for Excellent Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16 (10), 837-851.

Uebersezig, F. (2016). Berufsperspektiven von Sportmanagern – eine Untersuchung des beruflichen Einstiegs der Sportmanagement Absolventen der Universität Leipzig [*Occupational perspectives of sports managers - a study of the professional entry of sports management graduates of the University of Leipzig*]. Unpublished Bachelor Thesis. University Leipzig.

van Nes, F., Abma, T., Jonsson, H. & Deeg, D. (2010). Language differences in qualitative research: is meaning lost in translation? *European Journal of Ageing*, 7, 313-316

Wallrodt, S. & Thieme, L. (2016). *Übersicht Sportökonomische Studiengänge [Overview of Sport Management Study Programmes]*. Accessed online on 30 January 2018 at <https://www.hs-koblenz.de/profilepages/wallrodt/downloads/>

Weinert, F. E. (2001). Vergleichende Leistungsmessung in Schulen – eine umstrittene Selbstverständlichkeit, in F. E. Weinert (Ed.), *Leistungsmessungen in Schulen* (pp. 17-31). Weinheim: Beltz.

Wien, A. & Franzke, N. (2016). Unternehmenskultur – Zielorientierte Unternehmensethik als entscheidender Erfolgsfaktor. Springer Verlag: Wiesbaden.

Wildt, J & Wildt, B. (2011). Lernprozessorientiertes Prüfen im “Constructive Alignment”. In B. Behrendt, H.-P. Voss & J. Wildt (Eds.), *Neues Handbuch Hochschullehre: Lehren und Lernen effizient gestalten*. Berlin: Raabe Fachverlag für Wissenschaftsinformation

Wohlfart, O., Hodeck, A., Hovemann, G. (2017). Perspektiven auf dem Arbeitsmarkt Sport – Ergebnisse einer Absolventenbefragung der Universität Leipzig [*Perspectives on the job*

*market Sport - Results of a graduate survey of the University of Leipzig]. Sciamus – Sport und Management, Jg. 8, Nr. 2, p. 10-27.*

Wohlfart, O., & Hovemann, G. (2019). Using importance–performance analysis to bridge the information gap between industry and higher education. *Industry and Higher Education*, 33(4), 223–227. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950422219838465>

Zakus, D., Malloy, D. & Edwards, A. (2007). Critical and Ethical Thinking in Sport Management: Philosophical Rationales and Examples of Methods. *Sport Management Review*, 10, 133-158.





## Annex

### Annex 1: Code Book

1 Facts and Numbers	2
2 Quotes	36
3 Paraphrases	16
4 Assessment	0
4.1 Opportunity	63
4.2 Challenge	87
4.3 Important	37
4.4 Neutral	15
5 Trends	2
5.1 Other Trends	16
5.2 Digitalisation	44
5.3 Commercialisation	24
5.4 Internationalisation	26
6 IHE and Labour Market	0
6.1 Internships	8
6.2 Differences	19
6.3 Responsibility	38
6.4 Cooperation	26
7 Competencies	0
7.1 Methods and Professional Competence	0
7.1.1 Analytical Skills	13
7.1.2 Digital Competencies	6
7.1.2.1 Digital Marketing	14

7.1.2.2 Virtual Media/Platforms	3
7.1.2.3 Social Media	10
7.1.2.4 IT-Skills	6
7.1.3 Specialised Knowledge	20
7.2 Activity and Action Competence	0
7.2.1 Flexibility/Mobility	8
7.2.2 Capacity to make decisions	22
7.2.3 Practical Application	9
7.3 Socio-communicative Competence	0
7.3.1 Social Competencies	20
7.3.2 Problem Solving	11
7.3.3 Service/Customer oriented	7
7.3.4 Language Proficiency (English)	6
7.3.5 oral communication	16
7.3.6 Networking/Relation Management	22
7.3.7 Teamwork	33
7.4 Personal Competence	0
7.4.1 Intercultural/international competence	4
7.4.2 Sport affinity	9
7.4.3 Passion	11
7.4.4 Critical Reflection	8
7.4.5 Leadership	6



# Erasmus+

7.4.6 Responsibility	4
8 Jobs	0
8.1 Other	3
8.2 Sales	1
8.3 Consultant	2
8.4 Facility Management	1
8.5 Lawyer	2
8.6 IT	5
8.7 PR	14
8.8 Project Management	11
9 Qualifications	0
9.1 Specialisation	22
9.2 Other Qualifications	18
9.3 Work Experience	19
9.4 Type of Institute	21
9.5 Level of Education	22
10 Recruitment	0
10.1 Internships	5
10.2 Network	6
10.3 Internal	3
10.4 IHE	8
10.5 Other	2
10.6 Newspaper	7
10.7 Homepage	7
10.8 Online Platform	9
11 Socio Demographic Data	13

*Annex 2: Distribution of occurrence of the competencies teamwork, networking and oral communication without specific indication*

<b>Alias</b>	<b>Teamwork</b>	<b>Networking</b>	<b>Oral Communication</b>
C1	Yes	No	No
C2	Yes	No	No
C3	Yes	Yes	No
NP1	No	Yes	Yes
NP2	No	No	Yes
NP3	No	No	No
P1	Yes	No	No
P2	No	No	Yes
P3	Yes	No	Yes
PU1	Yes	No	No
PU2	Yes	No	No
PU3	Yes	No	Yes